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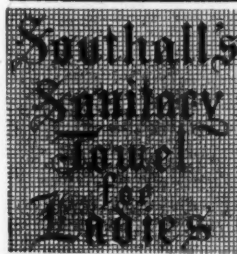
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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER 1884.

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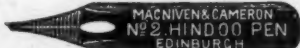
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Jack's Courtship.

A SAILOR'S YARN OF LOVE AND SHIPWRECK.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ST. PAUL'S ISLAND.

THE long swell shortened and flattened as the water shoaled ; and though the sun was over the gig's stern, yet I seemed to feel the shadows of the huge cliffs upon the white clear air as we drove softly into the north entrance, with the curious rocky breakwater jutting out of the blue on either hand and running up the cliffs into the sky. In another minute we were floating on the small, calm, internal sea or crater-lake that washed in silver round the base of the perfect cup, our sail lowered and our gaze in search of a landing-place. Florence stood erect, with her hands clasped and her eyes gleaming under a little frown of wonderment as she looked around her. The strange, mysterious silence, not a sound of the surf reaching us ; the tall circular heights of cliffs shadowing the sky, so that one seemed to look up through a huge shaft ; the startling paleness of the heavens that closed glimmering like a lid upon the rocky tops ; the metallic shine like quicksilver in the water on which we floated ; the sudden weird environment after the leagues of open ocean, combined to produce such an effect upon us all that for several moments after we had lowered away the sail, we remained silent, staring about us, and breathing quickly. Then said the bo'sun speaking in a low voice, 'Isn't that a hut there, Mr. Seymour ?'

I looked and spied a rude structure, apparently formed of rubble and roughly roofed with pitched planks, standing on

a broad ledge of rock up in the north-east corner of the crater.

'Yes,' I replied, speaking low too; 'that's a hut. It's near to the best landing place I can see. That'll be the spot to get ashore.'

'Talk o' Robinson Crusoe!' I heard one of the men mutter to another: 'damme if this here ain't a start that beats my time.'

'What's that moving up there?' cried Aunt Damaris, excitedly.

'It's a goat!' exclaimed Florence.

Sure enough, it was; and beyond it were two or three more. They looked down at us quietly from a grassy ledge or slope of rock about a hundred feet high.

'Goats, eh?' said the bo'sun peering at them. 'Well, I'm jiggered! There oughtn't to be a man fur off, Mr. Seymour.'

'If there's one anywhere about, he certainly can't be far off,' I answered.

The boat was brought alongside the low long ledge that came shelving down past the hut in the form of an esplanade; the men jumped out, and I assisted my darling and Aunt Damaris to step ashore.

There is always something thrilling in the first feel of solid dry land under the feet after weeks of the heaving and floating motion of shipboard; and I daresay this sense was strong in us all for the moment, though heaven knows it passed quickly enough in me into a positive emotion of horror when I glanced at the gloomy frowning cliffs. To be sure it was a reprieve from those dire perils of the deep we had come through, but it was only the reprieve that a desolate frightful dungeon would give to a man who, entering it, knows not if ever he shall get away from it. However, it would not do to give way to such fancies as these; I plucked up, and in as hearty a manner as I could summon, told the men to make the boat's painter fast and to hand the provisions and water out of her. Then noticing that Aunt Damaris and Florence could hardly stand, owing to their cramped limbs, I led them to where a piece of rock jutting out formed a natural seat, and leaned by their side against the cliff behind, watching the men, feeling my own legs too crippled to attempt any explorations until they should have got something of their use into them again.

The sunshine slanted through the broken ruin of the crater in a perfect gush of misty silver light, and flashed up half the whitish water of the lake till one seemed to be able to see to the very bottom of it. I now observed that the island, instead of being the naked lump of rock it had looked to be when viewed from a distance, was covered with coarse green grass; but there was no bush nor tree of any kind to be seen upon it. I ran my eye carefully over the crater walls, but could perceive no other

structure but the one that stood above us. What scene the island might submit from the towering heights I could not conceive; but I could not doubt that, if there were people upon it, they would be on this side, near the entrance, where the cliffs seemed most accessible; so that seeing nobody, and only the one dismal forlorn old hut built a little way up the steep, I felt persuaded then and there that we were absolutely alone.

I found Florence watching me anxiously. I smiled when our eyes met, and said, 'I see but one hut; but one is enough; it will shelter us for the short time I expect we shall remain here.'

'Oh, Jack,' she cried, 'how do you know it will be a short time? You can only hope it;' and she glanced sadly across the lake at the cliffs there, which stood up against the sky like prison walls.

'It's a fearfully desolate spot!' exclaimed Aunt Damaris, with a shudder, as if she were only now beginning to understand all the significance of this ocean rock. 'Was there no other land that we could have reached?'

'There'll be another island away out yonder to the east of north, but uninhabited like this,' I replied. 'Exclude that, Miss Hawke, and there is no land nearer than South Africa and Australia. Florence darling, you say I can only hope that our stay will be short. Well, there is nothing sure, and whether one is on a desert island or in a crowded city, one has still got to go on hoping. But why I believe we shall not be here long is because this is summer time in the Southern Ocean, and vessels in summer time bound to the eastward often pass close to St. Paul's. What we must do is to set up the boat's mast as a signal post on the hill-top there, and if your aunt will lend us that black silk shawl or handkerchief she wears pinned over her shoulders under her cloak, we'll hoist it as a signal.'

'Oh, certainly you can have it,' answered the old lady, and with trembling hands she opened her cloak, removed the shawl, and gave it to me.

By this time the men had got our little stock of provisions and water ashore, and were looking round them to see what was next to be done. I was already beginning to feel the benefit of stretching my legs by standing on them, and calling the bo'sun, I asked him and the others to join us that we might hold a council and consider what measures we were to take for keeping ourselves alive on the island till help came. The six seamen approached and stood in a group fronting us.

'First of all, my lads,' said I, 'how do you feel, now that we've done with the sea for a short spell?'

The bo'sun and two of the others answered that they felt first class, all alive O, and quite hearty; another said that he was pretty middling, and the fifth and sixth that they'd be all right when they had had some sleep.

JACK'S COURTSHIP.

'And you ladies?' asked the bo'sun.

Florence answered that she and her aunt felt cramped by their long confinement in the boat: otherwise they were well.

'Now,' said I, 'our first business will be to get that boat's mast set up on the hill yonder,' pointing to the eminence that I have since found marked as 845 feet high. 'Miss Hawke here has been good enough to furnish us with this shawl, which being black will make a fine signal. It'll be a deuce of a climb,' I continued, looking up: 'but it ought to be done, and done soon.'

'Jim,' said the bo'sun, turning to the man so called, 'let that be yours and my job: I allow that you and me's about the freshest.'

'Right you are!' responded the man.

I handed the shawl (I give it this name, but in reality it was a very large square silk handkerchief, about three and a half feet broad each way)—I say, I handed the shawl to the bo'sun, who folded it upon his knee and then shoved it under his waist-coat.

'Another thing that ought to be done at once,' said I, 'is for two of you to start off and see if there's any fresh water to be found. I am afraid you'll discover nothing but springs; these, if you come across them, you can taste, so as to let us know if the water'll be fit to drink when cold; but what I hope you'll find is rain water. I've got a notion that in the winter time whalers call here to fill their casks. There was plenty of rain on the night of the collision, and there's a chance of your meeting with enough to keep those breakers replenished. Who volunteers for that job?'

Two of them promptly answered.

'The others,' said I, 'will keep with me to overhaul that hut there, and see what can be done to make a habitable shanty of it.' I looked at my watch. 'We may as well have something to eat and drink before we start on our various errands.'

Some biscuit and a tin of meat were fetched, along with the brandy and a bottle of wine; we threw ourselves down without taking much heed of what we sat on—it was hard enough, whatever it was—and fell to our slender meal.

'If the long-boat means to fetch this island, Mr. Seymour,' said the bo'sun, 'she should be heaving in sight by this time.'

'You may sight her as you climb,' I replied. 'I'd sooner all the other boats missed this rock than she should. She's a craft to make use of, if help should prove too long in coming.'

'What help have we to reckon on, sir?' asked one of the men.

'A passing ship.'

He looked down, making no answer.

'I see nothen to make a flare of—nothen that'll make a smoke,' said another of the men, glancing at the cliffs over his shoulder.

'Well, let's have a hunt before we settle those things,' said I. 'There may be a store of old planks knocking about somewhere.'

'We shan't want for fresh meat if there's e'er a one of us nimble enough to catch them there goats,' observed the bo'sun.

'Ay, ye have to catch 'em first,' said a seaman.

'I have a pistol,' said I. 'By lying hid, some execution may be done with it.'

'How are we to cook the meat when we get it?' inquired Florence.

'Why, miss, there ought to be fire in this here island, if it's fire as makes smoke,' said the bo'sun, pointing to the vapour that was here and there oozing from the cliff. 'And if there's fire there ought to be nothen to stop us from cooking a bloomin' old goat.'

'Perhaps we may find a hot water spring fit to boil flesh in—and fish too,' said I. 'There should too be no lack of fish here.'

'They'll be like the goats, sir,' answered one of the men, grinning; 'they'll want catching.'

'We'll catch 'em if we have to dive for 'em,' exclaimed the bo'sun. 'Why, William, one 'ud think your liver was gone wrong, mate.' Then pulling off his waistcoat and carefully folding it, he proceeded to roll up his shirt-sleeves, meanwhile eyeing the cliff he was to climb, with his lips moving as if he were calculating. The man who was to assist him also turned to adjust himself for the very arduous job.

We lingered a bit longer while the others finished their dinner, talking over our chances of escape, what was to be done to attract the attention of distant ships, and so forth; and then the men set about their duties. I advised Florence and her aunt to keep where they were, for although the hut was not far off, there was a knee-splitting climb to be done in order to fetch it; but the old lady said she was too nervous to be left alone.

'How are we to know,' she exclaimed, with an alarmed look around, 'that this island is not inhabited by savages or wild beasts?'

'There is no room for such objects, Miss Hawke,' I replied. 'Why, I don't suppose the whole place is very much more than two miles long, and out of that you've got to take that lump of circular water there. But if you're at all nervous, by all means accompany us, if you think you can climb to that hut.'

She instantly got up, and I told the two seamen to support her by laying hold, each of them, of an arm. I then passed mine under Florence's, that she might use me as a crutch, and we slowly tramped up towards the hut, leaving the bo'sun and his mate busy unstepping the mast in the gig, whilst the others were scrambling over the rocks in search of water and whatever else was to be met with.

'Jack,' said Florence, 'do you think we shall be saved?'

'Yes,' said I,

'But *how*, Jack?'

'By a ship sighting our signal; or by some of us going away in the long-boat when she arrives; or by sending the gig to cruise twenty or thirty miles off away out yonder to intercept or chase any passing vessel. Most of us are sailors, my darling, and we shall find a way to be saved.'

'You and the bo'sun managed the boat wonderfully well last night, Jack. What darlings sailors are when one is in danger! But is not this a dreadful adventure? How sorry you must feel that you followed me to sea.'

'You daren't look me full in the face and say *that*,' said I, tightening my grip of her.

She peeped at me with a half smile, and then with a shudder and a deep sigh she exclaimed, 'Oh, Jack, I wish we were safe at home in Clifton.'

'A little patience, my pet,' said I; 'depend upon it we'll find our way there.'

'Does not my aunt keep up wonderfully? Would you not have thought that such a trial as this would have broken her down—almost *killed* her?' said she, sinking the music of her voice into a tremulous note of awe.

I looked at the poor old lady, staggering and slipping betwixt the two rough figures of the seamen, and agreed that she had certainly passed through quite enough since the night of the collision to have killed her off if she had not been a very wiry person. And here maybe, having Florence alone and her sweet arm snugged against my side, I might have indulged in several flights of sentiment respecting Aunt Damaris as an ally, and the strong hope of ultimately winning Mr. Hawke's favour which her regard and liking for me had kindled, but conversation was speedily rendered impossible by loss of breath. The old lady constantly forced the seamen to halt; and as often as she paused we did. The inner sides of the crater here ran away to a height of eight hundred feet or so in a sharp slope, crowded with bulging rocks, long broad ledges, inclined platforms and the like, and the labour of climbing—I do not speak of the sailors who were fresh from the ratlines and foot ropes of the ship—was quadrupled in our case by the deep feeling of fatigue that want of sleep induces and by the crippling of our limbs through our cramped confinement in the narrow gig. I felt heartily ashamed of my own lack of physical energy, which I could only attribute to the indolent life I had led for three years ashore, but nevertheless was always thankful enough when Aunt Damaris's pausings gave me an excuse to stop too, and fetch my breath. Indeed I believe that short climb distressed me more than Florence; which I can only attribute to the intense mental anxiety I had passed through and was still enduring, and to its effects upon my health and nerves.

Reaching the hut at last, we found ourselves inspecting one of the rudest shanties mortal being could imagine. It was about twelve feet long by ten feet broad, composed of windowless walls formed of rubble, or bits of rough rock and stone and rubbish cemented by a kind of mud, the appearance of which made me suppose it to have been taken from a bed of volcanic clay. It was roofed by a number of rude planks blackened with pitch, though rusty with wet and exposure. The entrance faced the slope: there was no door, and when I peered in, not knowing what sight I was to behold in it, I had to shut my eyes and rub them and wait a little before I could see. The structure was perfectly empty; here and there in patches the coarse grass of the island flourished upon the floor; I struck a wax match and looked into the corners, but found nothing. No hint was furnished us of the use this hut had been erected to serve; whether it was built by sealers or by castaways for shelter, or by a hunting party as a temporary refuge whilst they caught fish for salting, it was idle to conjecture. The gloom and nakedness of it fell with a chill upon the heart. I could not conceive of any detail invented by human hands that should more desperately heighten the horrible loneliness of that desert ocean-rock than this grim, dark, naked hut, suggesting nothing, and by its muteness forcing the mind into the dreariest fancies.

I looked at Aunt Damaris and Florence, who stood outside in the light, peering in at the dusk in which my figure would be scarcely visible to them.

'A nice hotel for them poor ladies to come to,' said one of the fellows at my side under his breath.

'Ay, we must count it as among the pleasures of shipwreck,' I replied. 'But let us say nothing to dishearten them or ourselves, mate;' and quitting the hut, I said to Aunt Damaris, 'It's but a rough place, Miss Hawke, but it's a shelter anyway; it'll be a roof to lie under, and I for one am thankful to find it ready for us here.'

'Is there any bed-place in it—anything to lie upon?' cried the poor old body, striving to pierce the dim interior.

'We'll soon rig up something that'll answer the purpose of a bed-place,' I replied.

'Oh, Jack,' exclaimed Florence, catching hold of my arm, 'it'll be impossible for us to sleep in that dreadful hole!'

'It'll be full of rats!' groaned out Aunt Damaris. 'Oh dear! oh dear! what a situation to find oneself in!' and the tears streamed down her face.

This wouldn't do at any price, so putting a great show of bustle and heartiness in my manner, I sung out, 'Why, it's a first class shelter! What should we have done without it? With the boat's sail for a mattress, Miss Hawke, you'll lie as snug as ever you did aboard the *Strathmore*. As to light, we have the boat's lantern;

and besides, there will be no need to see when the night comes—we shall want to sleep. Why, the sight of that hut should make one thank God. Men, think of us having no bed but these rocks, no cover but that sky up there! Florence,' I cried, caressing the hand that clutched my arm, 'where's the fine spirit that supported you through yesterday and last night! If ever we're to see Clifton again, my darling, we must cheer our spirits up so as to remain alive; for it's grief and misery that kill, not an old but like that which will keep the wet off if any wet falls, nor an island like this, which, bad as it is, is a mighty deal better than a small open boat in half a gale of wind. Eh, my lads, what say you?'

'Why,' answered one of them, 'I say that what ye're observing, sir, is full of good sense. No use crying, ladies, the job's a bad 'un: but bad as it is, it might ha' been so much worse that ye can't look fair into it without beholding a kind of hordering that should put a stop to any kind o' growling!'

'Ay, ladies, it's a bad job, as this man here says,' observed the other seaman, who probably supposed that I expected he should also make a speech: 'but it isn't so thick as to shut out all daylight, and ye know, mum, sailors don't take much notice of a squall that they can see through.'

'Those are the right sentiments,' said I: 'and now, lads, suppose we turn to to get this house shipshape. We'll bring the sail up from the boat and store the provisions here: and whilst you go about that job, I'll make my way up yonder and have a look at the ocean, for as the bo'sun said, if the other boats mean to join us, it's about time they were heaving in sight.'

Finding I meant to leave them for a few minutes, Florence and her aunt said they would go with the sailors to the place where they had sat near the boat; it was cheerfuller there than near that dreadful hut. So whilst they made their way down the slope, I slowly and laboriously climbed to a height of about a hundred feet above the hut, which brought me to the edge of the horn looking westward, whence I could see the huge lonely rock that stood hard by, shaped like a ninepin, and called as I have since heard by that name, with the open sea gleaming past the channel betwixt it and the coast of the island, and the leagues of water around stretching from about north by east to due south. After even the short environment of those lonesome towering crater-walls, it was with a sort of momentary joy that one looked into the mighty open distance. I was about the height of the *Strathmore's* main royal yard above the water, and consequently commanded a vast surface of ocean; but though my sight was extremely good and the atmosphere was of glass-like purity, I could not perceive the least sign of the boats. Not the faintest speck of white broke the sweep of the blue girdle. There was a faint bluish shadow trembling upon the sea-line past the ninepin-shaped rock a little to the east of north; and for some

moments I looked at it, wondering what it could be, but never for an instant mistaking it for a ship, till it came into my head that Amsterdam Island would bear that way about forty or fifty miles from St. Paul's, and that that dim blotch there must be it. I was amazed to see no signs of the boats. We had come through a rough night, it is true, but since the gig had weathered it the others should have been able to do so; and even supposing the sea had run too high for the management of one or two of them, it was not to be imagined that all had suffered. Where were they then? Why did not the long-boat heave in sight? Had they, more fortunate than us, been picked up by a ship? If so, and in such weather as this, she was sure to seek us on this island. Yet there was no appearance of a ship. Had they mistaken Amsterdam Island for St. Paul's? Had they run past this island in the dark? That seemed impossible, for the gig was the fastest boat, the others were a long way astern when the night came down, and yet, fast as we had sailed, we were a good eight miles distant from St. Paul's when the day broke; so that they could not have outrun this bit of land. I scanned the great blue surface narrowly through sixteen points of it, which was as much as I could embrace, but it was a huge blank in every direction except where the distant island dimly smudged the gleaming blue of the sky. Bitterly disappointed and deeply worried I felt, as I had reckoned upon the long-boat as a means of making our desperate condition known; for as I have said, she was a fine, large, powerfully-built boat, and I for one should not have hesitated in trying for the Cape or Australia, or any other distant land in her, to summon help there if I did not meet with it on the road.

Well, he and his mate were not atop of the great cliff yet, but they had made wonderful progress, considering the character of the steep, and their having to bear a middling heavy spar along with them. I left my perch and got down to where Florence and her aunt were sitting, and found that the men had carried the boat's sail to the hut, together with some of the provisions, and were now walking off with a small cask of water betwixt them, handling it as if it were glass, for we could not yet be sure that there was more to be had when that was gone.

'Are the other boats in sight, Mr. Seymour?' asked Aunt Damaris the moment I was near enough for her to call to me.

'No,' I replied, 'there are no signs of them!'

'No signs of them!' cried Florence in a tone of alarm. 'What has become of them, then?'

'No signs of them!' echoed her aunt; 'gracious mercy, what can have happened?'

'It's impossible to guess,' I replied; 'I don't know what to think. They may have mistaken the other island for this. They may have been rescued. They may all have foundered. God alone knows why they don't heave in sight.' Then seeing that I

was showing too much of the disconsolate mood I had tumbled into upon that cliff there, I said, 'But please understand, Miss Hawke, that so far as we are concerned, their not reaching the island means nothing. If I am troubled, it is for their sakes; I want to believe them safe; but if they arrived they could not help us, they could not do more than we are doing,' said I, looking up at the bo'sun and his companion who were mere pigmies on the slope above. 'Indeed their numbers might prove fatal to us. Think of a hundred souls on this island? How could they be fed——'

'Oh, but, Jack, you said that the long-boat might be the means of saving us,' interrupted Florence.

'It may come yet,' I replied evasively; for what could I say, how could I encourage them beyond trying to keep their hopes up? The facts were all before them—the boundless ocean, our tiny rock—they knew our chances as well as I. I could not do more than speak cheerfully and animate them by talking of our prospect of being released by a passing ship; but oh, my lads, it went into my heart like a knife to see the wild, troubled, hopeless look my darling gave me when with her sweetheart's eyes she had penetrated my thoughts, to hear her sudden convulsive sob, to mark the quick passionate clasp of her hands together, and the bitter despondent droop of her sweet face upon her bosom. I could not bear it. I sprang to her side and held her to me. God knows what I said: but if they comforted her, my eager, feverish assurances had a contrary effect upon her aunt; she burst into a miserable fit of weeping, wrung her hands, broke out into the strangest talk about her who would have gladly died to-morrow in her bed at home could she have found her way there, now having to perish fearfully by degrees upon a desert island and forced to leave her old bones to lie upon those rocks without a chance of Christian sepulture. This outburst did my darling good, by fixing her attention upon something else than our position. Grasping the old lady each of us by a hand, we turned to with all our might and main to hearten the poor old soul up. And whilst we were hard at this job, I suddenly spied her shawl floating fair in the sky over the hill-top from the mast which the bo'sun had at that moment planted.

'Look, Miss Hawke!' cried I, in such a tone of elation that I was almost deceived myself by it; 'there floats as noble a signal as was ever made by shipwrecked people. See how the two seamen value it; do you observe them waving their caps?' which we could very plainly perceive, though, if they cheered, not the faintest sound of their voices reached us. 'Every ship that passes this island has a telescope levelled at it: that flag, that signal there, will be as clear in the lens nine miles distant as it is to us here; and the first captain who sees it will instantly shift his helm to bear down and ascertain what it means.'

The poor old woman, drying her eyes, strained them at her shawl: but Florence, barely glancing at it, resumed her seat on the bit of cliff, and sat with clasped hands and downward-fixed gaze; and recalling her appearance, I believe that at that moment she had sunk to the lowest degree of hopelessness it is possible for the living heart to arrive at.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A HOPELESS POSITION.

THE bo'sun and his mate came down from the crater top leisurely, as if they conversed earnestly on the road. Sometimes they'd pause to look at the shawl, that made, alack! but a small enough signal: and then you'd see them peering out seawards under their hands; and now and again they'd crouch down as if they had come across a vegetable and were tasting it; and I saw them go to where some wreaths of vapour oozed up into the air, and take a long look at what was there. They met with the two explorers when they were half way down the slope, and then putting their faces resolutely towards us, the four of them came dropping and scrambling and shoving along.

The four men arrived, pale with heat and weariness; they cast themselves down upon the grass at the base of the lump of rock under which the ladies and I were sitting, and the fellows who had stayed with us came up from the edge of the crater lake where the gig lay, and sat down amongst their mates.

'Desperate hard climb that, sir,' said the bo'sun, looking up to the point where the boat's mast stood. 'A man needs to be all a goat to manage the likes of them mountains.'

'There's land in sight out away to the norrards,' said the sailor who had accompanied him.

'Yes,' I replied, 'Amsterdam Island: about as hospitable a rock as this. Did you see anything that resembled a boat, bo'sun?'

'There's ne'er a sign of 'em,' he said. 'Up there ye can see all round, and barring the bit of land on the north, there's nothen going but sky and water. It's queer, Mr. Seymour. What could have become of them?'

'We cannot imagine, Mr. Shilling,' exclaimed Aunt Damaris, whose eyes from weeping looked like ringworms. 'What do you think?'

The bo'sun stared hard at her and answered, 'There's no good speculatin', mum, when ye're dealing with the ocean. There's no good in wonderin', for it don't satisfy the mind, and if thinkin' can't do that, then what I say is, there's no use in indulging of it.'

'My notion is they've mistook the island and gone ashore on that lump to the norrards,' said one of the men.

'Likely enough,' I exclaimed. 'Did you meet with any fresh water?'

'Yes,' said the man, 'both hot and cold. There's an artificial well up yonder,' says he, pointing, 'properly dug with spades, with near half a ton o' soft water in it—shouldn't you think that's the quantity, Joe?'

'Ay, that's about it,' replied the other of the two explorers.

'We likewise met with three hot water springs,' continued the first speaker, 'all lying middling close together. Two of 'em was so hot that there was no tastin' of 'em as they came up: so I drew some of the water in my cap and let it cool, and then put my tongue to it.'

'Well?' said I.

'Well,' he said, 'it isn't sweet and it ain't salt. To my fancy it has a taste of marine soap: summat as fresh water 'ud taste after ye had washed and rinsed shirts and drawers that had been wet through with salt water.'

'The spring that comes up middling warm is fairly brackish,' said his companion. 'And yet at a stretch I dunno that all three fountains mightn't be drunk without harm.'

'And the rain water?' I asked.

'That's right enough, sir. I dipped my hand in and sucked my fingers. It's good water.'

'There's another collection of fresh water up nigh that mast,' said the bo'sun. 'We each took a drink of it out of my mate's cap, and ye wouldn't know it from the water in the breakers we brought with us. But it appears to me as if these here rain-water ponds dry up fast. We ought to find some means of storing what there is in 'em, for this weather,' said he, looking up at the sky, 'may last for another month, and if there's to be nothen for us to drink but hot water tastin' like the rinsings of sailors' shirts, we'd better turn to and think over some dodge for preserving what's left in the hartificial ponds.'

'Don't talk of another month!' cried Aunt Damaris.

'I'm only looking ahead, mum,' responded the bo'sun with a dismal squint at the shawl on the bill-top. It was but a tiny object—a barely noticeable thing—viewed even from our short distance from it; and I caught Shilling give a faint involuntary shake of the head as he withdrew his eyes from it. Afraid that he might say something to deepen the fit of despondency that had seized my darling, I changed the subject by asking what other reports they could give us of their explorations. 'Did you come across any vegetables?'

'Here and there,' said one of them, 'we'd spy a bit of a root that might ha' passed for parsley, but we durstn't taste it for fear that it might be poisonous.'

'I saw,' said another, 'what looked to be the head of a carrot. I hove it out o' the soil, but nothing came along of it but dirt clingin' to a set o' roots like the claws of a crab.'

'I observed the same object,' exclaimed the bo'sun, 'and when I hauled, nothen but dirt came up too.'

'I don't reckon,' said the man who had been his companion, 'that there's anything fit to eat in the shape of vegetables growin' upon this island. There's plenty o' goats: the bo'sun and me counted height, all lumped together, on the slope away to the westwards. Something startled 'em and we saw them run. If they're only to be cotched by our chasin' of 'em, I allow that they'll keep us fasting.'

'They'll not be caught,' said I, 'by our sitting here, wondering how we are to catch them. You seem to be settling into doleful views, my lads. Isn't it something that you should have found plenty of fresh water? And on the top of that are goats enough to keep us in fresh meat for six months. You say they're not to be caught. How do you know? It isn't sailor-fashion to give up without trying.'

'Mates, Mr. Seymour is quite right,' exclaimed the bo'sun. 'We'll be more cheerful when we've had some rest, sir.'

'Well,' said I, 'why don't those of you who are dead-beaten go and lie down? You'll find the boat's sail in that hut there, and here,' said I, pulling off my coat, 'is a pillow for one of you; and there are clothes enough amongst you to make out as many bolsters as you'll want.'

On this all of them but the bo'sun got up, and went lurching and scrambling wearily to the hut.

'They'll air the building for the ladies,' said Shilling, following them with his eyes. 'Poor fellows! they've had a tough time of it since the night of the collision. Ladies, sorry to see ye looking so downcast. Ye shouldn't think there's much the matter yet.'

'Oh, Mr. Shilling,' cried Florence, 'our prospects are so utterly hopeless!'

'Can't see it, miss, beggin' your pardon,' he answered. 'We've only been landed a few hours, and unless we're to suppose that a ship had caught sight of us and followed in our wake all last night, it wouldn't be reasonable to expect anything to heave in sight yet. Ye must give chance and luck time, miss. If after hexercising of our patience nothen turns up, why then Mr. Seymour here, I dessay, 'll agree with me, that the best thing we can do is for some of us to go away in the gig and seek help to the norrards. There's bound to be ships somewhere about there, voyaging to Australia or sailing or steaming westwards, and I for one shall be quite willing to go off in the boat and knock about till a vessel passes by.'

'That's one chance, anyway,' said I, looking at Florence. 'Trust me, our prospects are not utterly hopeless.'

'Pity there's nothen to make a flare of,' exclaimed the bo'sun, leaning on his elbow and leisurely gazing around him. 'Never see a bit of land with grass growin' on it so bare of bush as this here blooming rock. Would it be worth while, Mr. Seymour, stripping the roof off that hut to make a fire of if a sail should heave in view?'

'No, Shilling. The shelter is too valuable. Besides, you've got to consider that this is a volcanic island with vapour regularly oozing out of parts of it—as you can see; and any smoke we made would in my opinion be set down as a natural thing, having nothing to do with people in distress.'

'That is quite probable,' said Aunt Damaris, cocking her eye at her shawl up in the sky.

'It's a small signal,' I continued, noticing that the bo'sun and Florence followed the old lady's gaze: 'but small as it is, I have no doubt that in clear weather like this, and with the aid of a good glass, such as most ships carry, it will be distinctly visible at the distance of the horizon.'

'Well, I dessay it may,' said the bo'sun, speaking as if to hide his doubts. It was plain he had no opinion of that shawl as a signal, and was a good deal worried and disappointed by the very small result of his exceedingly heavy labour.

'Meanwhile,' said I, 'we must go to work and find out how we are to provide ourselves with food whilst we remain here. Be our stay short or long, we shall want to eat.'

'That's sartin,' remarked Shilling.

'We ought to be able to knock over some of those goats with my pistol,' said I. 'It has five chambers loaded, and I've got thirty or forty cartridges in my pocket. By creeping carefully and watching them just before the dusk settles down, one should be able to draw near enough to kill them with a pistol.'

'Yes,' said the bo'sun, 'but my notion is that our best chance of getting enough to eat lays in that water there,' pointing to the lake. 'If it ain't full of fish, and lobsters and crabs and the likes of such harticles of food as them, I'll swaller my boots. The job'll be to get 'em out of the water. There's nothen I can think of as we could fashion into hooks.'

'I have some hair-pins,' exclaimed Aunt Damaris, putting her hand to her bonnet.

'I'm afraid they'd prove too soft to hold a fish,' said I.

'Will you let me see 'em, mum?' observed the bo'sun.

Whereupon, to save her aunt the trouble of removing her bonnet, Florence drew one from the noble coil of hair she carried under her hat. The bo'sun worked it about with his great tarry fingers, and then said 'he was afeared the wire'd prove too pliant; still, there was no tellin'; something might hook himself upon it and not be able to wriggle off; only the end 'ud want sharpening, for this here point,' said he, trying it with his thumb, 'would

never pierce a fish's eye, and it 'ud need a month's rubbin' against stone to bring it keen. The worst of shipwreck is, it leaves folks without conveniences. If we'd brought the carpenter's tool chest along with us, we'd be having biled fish for supper to-night, I warrant. Failin' hooks, Mr. Seymour, the next dodge must be to convert the boat's sail into a kind o' trawl, and sweep the water there as deep as we can let it go. There's no conceivin' what it might bring up.'

The time wore away slowly. The men lay in the hut during the greater part of the afternoon. I looked in upon them when I climbed for the second time past the structure to search the ocean for a sight of the boats, and could just distinguish their figures lying upon the sail or the patches of grass, all as motionless as corpses, though the sound of their deep breathing rose up strong from the ground and made the gloom so solemn that it bred a kind of awe in a man to stand there and listen. The bo'sun, after he had done talking to us, went to the boat to seek for something there as I supposed, but losing sight of him and wondering what on earth had become of him, I walked to the boat, and peering into her found my friend dead asleep at full length in her bottom, with his arm for a pillow and his legs stretched along under the thwarts.

All this while, Florence and Aunt Damaris remained near the spot on which we had landed, sometimes moving to stretch their limbs, but for the most part sitting on the low narrow ledge to which I had originally conducted them. I had them full in my sight as I came down the slope, and the thoughts they put into me, coupled with the wild trouble the absence of the boats occasioned, forced me into the slowest possible movements, that I might have leisure to calm my mind and smooth my face before I confronted them. I asked myself, if we were doomed to linger upon this rock, how are those women to manage? They have but the clothes in which they stand, and no means of repairing them. What in God's name am I to do for them if the period of our imprisonment should swell from days into weeks, from weeks into months? It was enough to raise a kind of madness in me to think of *that*. I'd look from them to the hut that was to shelter them; then round the precipitous crater-walls, and wonder how we were to get food; and all through these horrible hopeless thoughts would run the passion of my love for the gentle beautiful girl whose pale face looked towards me as I approached, till the manhood in me seemed as if it would melt away and leave me a weeping idiot, fit only to mumble for mercy with my eyes upon the sky.

By the time I had come to them, however, I had got a good grip of my mind once more: and having found out where the bo'sun was, I went up to Florence, took a seat beside her, and held her hand.

'All but us three,' said I, 'are snoring at the top of their pipes.'

Darling, you must be frightfully tired, you too, Miss Hawke. Remember, we have had no sleep for two nights.'

'I could not lie down upon these rocks,' said Aunt Damaris, with a smile so painful that it was like being wounded to see it.

'No,' said I, 'but the boat's sail folded would make a soft mattress for you and Florence; and if you wish for rest I'll have those fellows up there off that sail in a trice.'

My darling's fingers tightened upon mine as she said, 'I could not sleep *there*.'

'Why not?' I exclaimed. 'You will sleep there to-night. You must lie under shelter.'

She shuddered, but made no reply.

'It's a mere matter of imagination,' I continued. 'When once you are asleep and resting peacefully, as you will, it's all the same whether you lie dreaming in a desolate hut like that or in your own bedroom at home.'

'Oh, Jack; not until sleep comes!' she cried.

'I could not sleep if I were to lie down, Mr. Seymour,' said Aunt Damaris. 'I would rather remain here in the open air. Did you see anything when you were on the cliff just now?'

'Nothing.'

She sighed convulsively, and turned her eyes up to heaven with her hands clasped.

'Let the night pass, let us all get what refreshment we can find in sleep,' said I, 'and to-morrow our clearer heads will enable us to see if there is any daylight in this situation of ours. Don't despair; you have shown great courage, and both of you have confronted the perils we have been brought into with stout hearts. Besides, did you not say you have confidence in me? Don't dishearten me by causing me to think you have lost faith.'

'I have not lost faith, Jack,' cried Florence passionately; 'if there's anything a sailor could think of to be done, you'd do it, it would come to you. But I know you are as hopeless as aunt and I——'

'No, no!' I exclaimed.

'I cannot be deceived,' she continued: 'I have watched you looking around, I have watched you thinking; you cannot hide your thoughts from me; and there was such a depth of sadness and love in the tearful eyes she fixed upon me, that the only answer I could give her right off was to throw my arm around her and hold her to my heart. She hid her face on my breast, and kissing her cheek, I looked at Aunt Damaris over my loved one's head.'

'May I feel,' I said, 'that come what may, Miss Hawke, this girl, whom I love as never was woman better loved, is mine with your consent?'

She answered immediately, 'Yes; you deserve her, Mr. Seymour. I hope God may spare you to come together as man and wife. I have no doubt of your unselfish devotion. I have seen

enough to convince me that your hearts are one. Florence's papa shall know the truth—' and then she stopped short with a wild glance around her.

I whispered, 'You hear what your aunt says, my sweet one. Can you believe that the Almighty has brought us together here to miserably perish? Oh, for His sake keep up your heart—have faith in His love and protection. No one who knows the sea and its chances would dream of abandoning hope till the darkness of death itself had come down.' And then, raising my voice: 'Miss Hawke, is it not true that every shipwreck is full of miraculous deliverance? Look at that little boat there, and recall the sea she carried us through last night.' And being strangely elated by what the old lady had said to me, and by having my darling in my arms, I turned to and spun them all the yarns of wonderful escapes at sea which I could think of; scores of them I knew; of a wave washing a man overboard in a pitch black night and bringing him safely back again, setting him down tenderly on his stern, and leaving him in peace to squeeze the salt out of his eyes; of five men living on the bottom of a capsized schooner, dining and supping for six days off barnacles and weed, with a drink of beer between whiles, which they came at by cutting a hole in the planking and thrusting in their hands till they arrived at a case of bottled ale; of others successfully performing a six weeks' voyage in a small open boat, their sole food during half the time having been a dog, some flying fish, and a few mollemokes; of a seaman knocking about for four days in a lifebelt, and then being picked up alive and made hearty again in twenty-four hours by a liberal prescription of rum and roast pork. These were but samples of the yarns I told them, every one of them gospel-true, though, as Florence listened, I'd see a gleam of incredulity shoot into her eyes which would set me laughing, for with true land-going instincts she'd doubt the very things which seafaring people would accept as ordinary incidents of the marine life. Yet this yarning was profitable work. The obligation of thinking for stories kept me lively and I was listened to with interest, Aunt Damaris in particular often rounding off a tale by saying, 'Well, Florence, I am sure after *that* we have no right to despair;' and 'Why, their case was far worse than ours, certainly, and yet they were saved!' and the like.

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon when the bo'sun shoved his head above the gunwale of the gig and then stood up, stretching his arms with a great roaring yawn. He looked about him as if he couldn't make up his mind to believe what he saw in a hurry, and then spying us he got out of the boat.

'Fraid I've been having a pretty long nap, sir,' said he.

'No, not very long,' I replied; 'but you'll be the better for what you've had.'

He asked me the time, which I gave him, adding that the

ladies would be wanting something to eat, and that the men had better be roused out.

'Ye've not been sitting here ever since, ladies, have you?' he asked. Florence replied yes.

'I hope,' said he, 'it's not because there's only the hut to use, and you couldn't enter it while the men were there. If I thought that, I'd have the whole blooming lot of 'em cut of it by the hair of their head in a jiffey.'

'We preferred to remain in the open air,' observed Aunt Dama s.

'Any sight of the boats, Mr. Seymour?' he asked.

'There was nothing to be seen when I last looked,' I answered.

He glanced up at the signal he had erected and then at the sky, and walked a short distance beyond the boat where the trend of the rocks sloping to the breakwater would carry him past the cliff, and give him a view of the sea in the east. There he stood for a few moments staring, and, singing out to me, 'Nothen in sight but blue water, and beautifully blue it is, to be sure,' he rejoined us. 'What's the next thing to be done, sir?' he asked.

I told him to rouse out the men and bring materials enough for supper for all hands with him, along with wine for the ladies. This he did, and after a few minutes the men emerged one by one from the hut, rubbing their eyes and stretching themselves and gazing around them, as Shilling had when he awoke. They gathered about us, sitting on the grass, whilst I divided the preserved meat and biscuit, and handed Florence and her aunt some wine, leaving the bo'sun to serve out the rum to the men. They seemed the better for their rest, less hollow-eyed, and they were brisker in their movements. They looked concerned enough when the bo'sun told them that neither the ladies nor I had slept, and one of them said shyly to Aunt Damaris, 'Hope, mum, it wasn't our being in the hut as kept ye out of it. We went there because Mr. Seymour here told us to go; but the grass outside is plenty soft enough for us to lie on—'

I stopped his apologies by telling him the ladies preferred to wait for the night to use the hut; 'and then, my lads,' said I, 'it'll be for us men to consider whether it shouldn't be occupied by them and nobody else.'

'It don't want considerin', Mr. Seymour,' exclaimed the bo'sun; 'it's a settled job. That hedifice is for the use of the ladies only, mates; am I right or am I wrong?'

'Right,' they all answered.

Florence began to remonstrate. 'No, no!' I interrupted; 'we're sailors here. We all know what's due to ladies. The men mean that you and your aunt shall occupy that hut, and you'll vex them by declining.'

'Yes, you'll vex us all, miss,' exclaimed the bo'sun.

'But where will you sleep?' she asked.

'Why, on the small of our backs, miss,' he answered. 'Men like us, who are accustomed to the softest plank we can pick out in a ship's deck for a snooze, aren't going to make much account of a plot o' grass for a featherbed, even though there should be nothen under the verdure but rock. Consider how them goats we've seen exist, and ye may reckon that the sailor who isn't the equal of a goat in everything but jumpin' must be the poorest o' poor creatures, and fit only to list as a soger.' The others murmured assent. 'But,' continued the honest fellow, 'I don't know that Mr. Seymour isn't entitled to a corner of that hut, say the part close 'longside the door. Ye see, ladies, 'cording to his own account, he's knocked off the sea now three year and more; in that time you may take it a good lump of shore-going henervation has got mixed up in his blood, his hands have growed white, and the smell of the tar-bucket has pretty nigh gone off him. Consequently he's not to be treated like these here out-an'-outers,'—pointing among the men, who grinned broadly to the compliment—'and if ye can spare him a bit of that old roof yonder, just to keep the doo off his face, I daresay ye'll find him thankful for your kindness.'

Florence smiled, and Aunt Damaris said, 'I certainly couldn't dream of sleeping with my niece alone in that dreadful hut, Mr. Shilling. I could only consent to use it on condition that Mr. Seymour is with us.'

'Well, that clinches it anyway,' said the bo'sun, looking at me gravely.

'Will any watches be kept going?' asked one of the men.

'That is as you please,' I answered. 'As we have no means of making our existence known by night-signals, I don't see [that] any good can be done by keeping a look-out. It's a mighty pity, Shilling, that Captain Thompson, in ordering the boats to be victualled, should have forgotten to give us rockets and blue-lights.'

'There was an armful put into the long-boat,' said one of the men.

'But none in the gig,' I exclaimed. 'Perhaps he never doubted that the boats would fetch this island, in which case the long-boat's stock would do for all.'

'There's always something forgot in these here cases that's terribly missed when it's too late,' observed the bo'sun.

'To return to the question of watches,' said I. 'There's plenty to look out for, but there's nothing to signal with. I don't know, therefore, that a regular look-out is necessary. On and off you'll be awake through the night, as I shall; and any man who wakes up, can do no harm by taking a look round.'

'I fancy that'll be all that's necessary, sir,' remarked the bo'sun, with a despondent squint at the shawl flying on the eminence above the slope.

'One of you will please get the lamp trimmed ready for lighting in the hut,' said I. 'And now, my lads, if you feel up to the mark after your rest, you can't better kill the time than by looking about you for a sheltered nook to lie in during the night, and some of you might overhaul these rocks here round that lake for crabs or anything else eatable, whilst others can't do better than make another exploring trip. Where's my coat?'

'In the hut, sir,' answered one of the men.

I desired him to fetch it, and when he had returned, I pulled out the pistol and gave it to the bo'sun, telling him it might be worth his while to try his hand upon a goat with it. He might drop upon one unawares, I said, and if he could kill it, it would be a valuable addition to our stock of provisions. The men seemed to relish this programme. Two hours stood between us and sundown, sleep had freshened them, and the interest of groping and hunting about would keep up their spirits, even if no more serviceable result followed. As for myself, mental suffering and the want of rest had left me fairly exhausted, and such was my painful and distressing lassitude that, had my life depended upon my climbing a couple of hundred feet of those rocks, I must have perished, for the task would have been utterly beyond me. Pulling out sticks of tobacco, the men proceeded to cut pieces of the stuff into their tar-stained hands and load their pipes; then, emptying the pannikin of rum and water amongst them, they got on to their feet and dispersed in twos, leaving Florence and Aunt Damaris and myself in the place we had hung about pretty nearly the whole of that long, miserable day.

The first of the men to return was the bo'sun. He said, as he gave me back my pistol, that all the goats he could see were at the northernmost end of the island, down hill, and not hard to come at he dared say, if it hadn't been that he didn't relish the prospect of the climb back in the eye of the coming dusk. 'But I've got no doubt in my own mind,' he added, 'that they're to be cotched by our breakin' of ourselves up into hunting parties, with you in the centre lying hid to shoot 'em as they're drove your way.'

Presently the others arrived, one of them carrying an immense crab, which he let drop into a deepish hole in the cliff near us, saying that it would lie there snug till the morning, and could then be cooked in one of the hot springs, and that he only brought it along as a sample, for there were scores of the like of it knocking about among the rocks over yonder, pointing to the edge of the lake in the north-west, about a quarter of a mile distant. This was the best piece of news that had been given us that day.

'Miss Hawke,' said I; 'Florence, my darling; let me conduct you now to that hut, and see you comfortably stowed away for the night.'

In the twilight I saw the old lady turn her face towards the

dismal shanty, whilst my darling with something of a convulsive gesture passed her hand through my arm.

'I suppose we must lie down there—there's no help for it,' said Aunt Damaris in a vibratory voice. And so speaking, she rose up. I requested the bo'sun to give her a hand to climb the slope that stretched betwixt us and the hut, and they slowly moved off, Florence and I following.

'You'll not leave us alone, Jack?' moaned my poor frightened pet. 'Oh, I'd a thousand times rather remain awake all night, and keep here, out of doors, with you.'

'My sweet girl, you want rest; you'll break down if you don't get some sleep,' I answered. 'You're not a rough sailor, who can throw himself down on the grass here, and fall a snoring without thought of the animals that may crawl into his ears, and the lumps of stone that may fit in under his shoulder-blades. Already the dew is heavy, and in an hour or two the grass will be as wet as if a thunder-shower had passed. The hut will keep you clear of the damp, and there is nothing to fear in the old shanty itself.'

She said no more; but all the time I could see she recoiled from the idea of lying in that grim, dark hole of a structure; it was a sort of grave, I believe, in her sight, a place where shipwrecked men had died; and a hundred times over, I know, would she rather have kept awake all that night out in the open, and seen the stars clear over her, than have put that roof betwixt her and their light. But it was out of the question in my opinion, and that was enough for me, who valued her life and health many, many times above mine; and I think she felt the sort of command my love lay upon her by the way she stopped reasoning, and climbed by my side up the slope after her aunt.

The lamp was alight in the hut, and the fellow who had trimmed it had slung it to a rusty old nail that was half buried in the wall near the door. Up in a corner were our provisions, a fearfully slender stock for nine of us, and quite enough to make a man's heart cold in him to see. The boat's sail lay stretched upon the dark ground, and that was the whole of the furniture in that hut. The bo'sun and I picked it up and doubled it over, so that one half would serve as a cover and the other as a mattress; I then made a pillow of my jacket, and of Florence's waterproof cloak; and this being all that could be manufactured in the shape of a bed, I asked them to lie down and I would cover them with the half of the sail.

'Heaven preserve us, what a bedroom!' cried Aunt Damaris, gazing around her with horror.

'Jack,' exclaimed Florence, 'how are you going to sleep? You cannot lie upon this hard ground!'

'I shall take a snooze, Hindoo fashion,' said I, 'by squatting. There's a soft corner there,' pointing to the right of the door, 'and

I shall sit in it like a Chinese joss, and dream that I am being worshipped.'

'If a man could take turn and turn about with them there joshes,' exclaimed the bo'sun grinning, 'I'm one as 'ud volunteer fast enough for the job. Why, sir, they're made holler, and the people as goes to chapel to 'em fills 'em up with hofferings, such as earrings and brooches and valuables of that kind. I'd be a josh and welcome. But what d'ye want to sit up in that corner for, Mr. Seymour? There's a fine patch of grass under your feet where you're standing now. Couldn't you lay down on that with your elbows for a pillow?'

'Oh, I'll manage somehow or other; don't trouble about me, Shilling,' I replied. 'Now, Miss Hawke, pray set Florence an example by lying down. Once you are on the sail you'll both fall sound asleep.'

'You have given me your coat,' said my darling.

'Because you want a pillow, and the coat smothers me, my pet, I answered.

She looked as if she would beg me to take the coat, but I held up my hand in deprecation of her entreaty, so she hung her head and stood without speaking. Aunt Damaris took off her bonnet, and putting on her cloak pulled the hood of it over her head; then stepped upon the sail and sat down. I asked Florence to let me remove her hat, but she did this herself, and getting on to the sail placed herself alongside her aunt. They then lay back, and I snugged the half of the sail over them; but my heart was made so full by the sight of them upon the hard ground with nothing between them and it but the sail, that I could hardly falter out 'God bless you both—good night,' and turned hastily to join the bo'sun who stood in the door.

'Poor ladies,' he mumbled in a low voice; 'fond as ye are of the sweetest of 'em, sir, it's a bitter hard trial to you, I reckon. But it might ha' been worse, Mr. Seymour. It's a shelter, anyway, though, may the Lord deliver us, the rummiest of the kind as ever I see.'

'Why, it comes home to me as you say, Shilling,' I exclaimed, 'not only because one of them is my sweetheart and the other an old lady, but because they're both accustomed to all the comforts and luxuries that money can buy, and less fitted than scores of other folks to endure such hardships as these. Great God!' I muttered, with a glance at them, 'what a leveller is shipwreck, bo'sun! It's next to death in the power of killing distinctions of class.'

'Well, Mr. Seymour,' said he, 'take my advice now and turn to and get some rest yourself. Ye've had no sleep for two nights and three days, and we don't want you to break down, for if we're to get out of this cursed mess it'll be you that'll show us the road. If ye think you're likely to miss your jacket, you're welcome to my vestcoat, sir. These here sleeves'll keep your arms warm.'

I thanked him heartily, but declined his offer, bidding him remember that I should be under shelter, whereas he was to find a bed among the rocks.

'Well, good-night, sir. No use,' said he, 'of worrying ourselves with talkin' over our chances and what's to be done. I'll go and see where the men are. Some of us 'ud better hang near the boat, I think, to mind that she don't break away in the night.'

'Ay,' said I, 'see to that for heaven's sake.'

We shook hands and he went away. I felt it was a hard necessity indeed that put these poor fellows upon sleeping out in the damp; but it was their own wish. I doubt if I could have persuaded the bo'sun to use the hut, and if he declined the others would have gone on refusing; and then again the fear that Florence and her aunt would have stubbornly objected to lying down amidst the seamen, and through the reasonable prejudice of an insurmountable instinct of delicacy or modesty, or whatever you like, have given the men offence, had weighed greatly with me. At all events my darling was *first*: it was better that the sailors should suffer than she; and even if she had consented to occupy the hut with the seamen, the suffering her sense of delicacy would have endured from the participation would have been an intolerable thing for me to notice through the night without being able to relieve.

They both lay very still. I should have been glad to slip out and take a look around me, but they were awake and might be alarmed if I quitted them; so very quietly I sat myself down in the corner I had fixed upon, where the wall propped up my back, and stretching out my legs and folding my arms dropped my chin upon my breast and shut my eyes. Painfully wearied I was; my eyelids weighed like lead; but a long while passed before I dozed.

A hand was laid on my shoulder; the touch was in accord with a part of my dream that made the grab of human fingers a sequential thing; and such was the effect of it upon me that I sprang like a harlequin to my feet with a loud cry. My shout was re-echoed by Florence, and Aunt Damaris rose hastily out of the sail.

'My God, Mr. Seymour, sir, collect your mind,' said a gruff voice at my elbow; and rubbing my eyes previously, I turned and confronted the bo'sun. There was still a little flame left in the lamp, and the grey of dawn hung like a pale mist outside the door against the cliff-side. 'Mr. Seymour!' exclaimed the bo'sun, doubtful whether I was yet awake. But I was wide awake now, and I asked him what was the matter. His voice trembled as he said 'There's a brig brought up off the island.'

'What!' I shouted, lifting my arms, and keeping them upraised. He sprang to my side and grasped my hand. 'Ay,' he cried in a hurricane note, 'as I live to speak it, there's a brig brought up off the entrance. She's within reach of our voices. I've left

the men hailing her to bring ye the news. Oh, ladies! we'll be homeward bound now! hurrah! hurrah!

I jumped to the door, but was arrested by a shriek from Florence. 'Don't leave us, Jack! don't leave us! take us with you.'

Heaven alone knows whether in that wild moment my darling imagined I meant to dash down to the brig, spring aboard her, and sail away to Bristol alone. But I never thought to ask: I ran to her side, helped her off the sail, gave her her hat and her waterproof, and tumbled myself into my own coat, whilst Aunt Damaris fought and struggled with her bonnet and cloak, and the bo'sun in the doorway stood roaring out: 'It was Jim Bailey who spied her first. We all lay last night close to the gig—near to where you ladies was sittin' yesterday: Jim says he roused up and took a look seawards and spied her. Then he kicks us all round in his excitement to rouse us up, singing out that there was a brig. We all jumped up, and there sure enough she was. We see her close to and black agin the faintness in the heast. She lies with her taw'sails and foresails clewed up and port anchor down waitin' for daylight, I allow, to send a boat ashore. She's a small brig, 'bout two hundred tons. Her foretopgall'nmast's gone, an' I reckon she's in ballast by her height o' side.'

'Cut along to the others,' I bawled to him. 'See what they are about. Send a couple of hands in the gig to her—no! hold on with the gig! Get along and be with them. We'll be with you in a jiffy!' and off he ran.

I trembled with excitement and had difficulty in speaking. Fresh as I was from nightmare, I could hardly yet realise the significance of the bo'sun's news unless it was to regard it as a continuation of my horrible visions, to be rendered by disappointment the most dreadful of them all. Within a few moments of the bo'sun's departure I had my sweetheart's and her aunt's hands in mine, in hot pursuit of him; hot in spirit, I mean, though, thanks to the old lady, our legs were miserably slow. In a few minutes we were among the sailors, and then we saw the brig.

I looked at her, breathing fast, still holding the hands of the women. The rim of the sun was just showing above the water, plunging a glorious sparkling beam through the rosy mist which the calm sea reflected from the sky that was burning with rose and gold above the luminary till the yellow reached the zenith where it melted into blue; and that beam seemed to come like a flaming wand out of the east to show us the brig lying within musket-shot of the shore, heaving very softly upon the exceedingly light swell, and sending to our ears the sound of the flapping of canvas and the music of running gear, tautened and slackened in blocks by the rolling. Light she was, and clearly in ballast: a round-bowed clumsy old timber-waggon, with a big bow-port, a stump maintopgallantmast, her sails hanging in the clewlines, and

evidence in a fragment of foretopgallantmast standing jagged above the topmast cross-trees of her having been in a mess of some kind or other. A couple of deck-houses showed above her bulwarks, and over the rail betwixt the main rigging and the fore deck-house was a knot of heads, with a fellow standing up holding on to a shroud. I said to the bo'sun 'Are they English?'

'Yes, sir; anyway they answer in English.'

'What have they been saying?'

'They've lost their boats, and have asked us to board them.'

'Then,' cried I, 'jump into the gig, three of you, and go you along with her, Shilling, and bring off the captain or mate or whoever may be in charge, that I may give him our story.'

This was done at once; three fellows hopped into the gig, the bo'sun jumped into the sternsheets, and shoving off, out they slipped through the bar, and headed for the brig. I then ordered the two men who remained with us to go up to the hut, and fetch all the provisions and drink that they could carry in their arms. They obeyed smartly, and no sooner were Aunt Damaris and Florence and I alone, when my darling came to me. I could not help myself; the moment she was near me and I saw the love in her gaze, and hope and joy bright on her face, I folded her in my arms and kissed her again and again, whilst her aunt looked from us to the brig, from the brig to us, with such rolling eyes that they seemed to dance in her head with the transports that filled her. The instant I let my sweetheart have her breath, she fired twenty questions into me. Would the brig save us? Was she likely to sail away without us? Where would she carry us to if she took us off the island? and so forth.

'No fear,' said I, fondling her, 'she'll save us;' and going up to the old lady I took her hand and kissed it. 'Miss Hawke,' said I, 'yonder vessel proves that God has watched over us. My words to Florence have come true: I told her that we should not be left to miserably perish here. But who could have believed that our imprisonment would only last a day and a night!' and I looked up at her shawl that hung in the motionless atmosphere an almost invisible thing upon the mast on the hill-top, and thought of the dreadful feeling of hopelessness with which I had watched it on the preceding day.

'Yes, Mr. Seymour,' she exclaimed, 'who could have believed it? Not I, for one. I never dreamt that we should escape. Oh, what a fearful time we have passed through! When shall we go on board the vessel?'

'I hope as soon as I have had a talk with the captain of her.'

'Let it be soon, dear Mr. Seymour,' she cried. 'My legs yearn to leave this horrid rock. I feel as if I could jump from here to the ship.'

'You shan't be kept waiting if I can help it,' said I. 'Strange that I did not sight her last night. The breeze was light and she

must have been near the island when I turned out to take a look round, or she could not have fetched that anchorage at daybreak. Probably she came up from the north-west, a part of the sea out of my view up where I had posted myself. Did you sleep well, Miss Hawke ?

‘Quite soundly,’ she replied. Florence also said she had slept well, and neither of them seemed the worse for the hard bed they had lain on. Apparently we were to have another brilliant, calm day. The sun had risen clear of the sea and was shining white in the blue, levelling its glorious flood of silver into the hollow crater through the entrance facing east, and flashing up the water of the lake till the strong light seemed to float off it and make a veil through which you caught a glimpse of the blocks and crags of rock mirrored this side its circular margin. The boat was alongside the brig and the bo’sun had clambered over the rail. The sound of the voices of the fellows in the gig talking to some men hanging over the vessel’s rail came very clear along the oil-like azure glint. Presently the two sailors arrived from the hut, bearing what provisions and bottles they could carry. I made them set the things down, and the five of us went to breakfast, but Florence and her aunt could only make a show of eating ; they were too deeply moved and excited to feel hungry. Mates, I declare that the horrible mess the collision had hove us into was almost worth enduring for the sake of seeing the life and hope and delight of my darling stealing and brightening out of her loveliness now that help was come. She could not downright smile, perhaps because remembrance and what had now happened held between them too much of the pathos that goes to the making of a sadness that’s as much pleasure as grief, to allow happiness to define itself in that way in her. But the light of her heart that had opened like a flower since the dawn broke, lay on her sweet and adorable face ; every glance she gave me was a look of deepest love ; and could I have had my way, such was my passion of gratitude and happiness, I’d have taken her hand and climbed with her to where God’s heaven would show visible all around, and knelt with her there alone, and thanked Him. It would have been a prayer for us two sweethearts to remember in after years ; a thanksgiving to God close to the sky, upon a rock where His presence was felt in a sense no church nor cathedral could reach up to, amid the mighty solitude of the boundless ocean. But I could not carry her off alone for such a purpose, and so I said nothing about it ; but often have I regretted since that she and I missed the prayer we could have put up in that way, and the memory that would have been born of it.

We were eating and talking, asking the men how they had slept, speculating about the reason the brig had in calling at this island, making conjectures about the other boats and so on, when we heard the splash of oars and the creak of rowlocks, and saw the

gig making for the breakwater with a stranger seated alongside the bo'sun. He was a square-shouldered, burnt-up seaman, apparently a forecastle hand, dressed in an old Scotch cap and a well-worn jersey. He stared hard at us, as if the sight of the ladies surprised him, and when he got out of the boat, he followed the bo'sun with the most rolling walk I ever saw in a seafaring man.

'This is Mr. Seymour,' said the bo'sun, indicating me to him; 'the passenger as had charge of the boat, and these are the ladies,' as if the fellow could not see *that* for himself. Then addressing me he said, 'This man's the holdest hand aboard the brig, and kind of actin' captain like. There's no boss but him. It's been a bad job for 'em all. But he'll tell you the story, sir, with your leave, while me and the others get something to eat.' I gave the seaman my hand, saying, 'I don't know what your story may be, but by bringing this brig here you're delivering us from a frightful position, as you may guess it to be if you cast your eye around you, and we are thankful to Almighty God that you have come.' And so saying I shook him heartily by the hand, and was followed in that business by Aunt Damaris and Florence, whose thanks and tearful voices seemed to cast what mind he had brought with him altogether adrift, and all he could do was to work away at his Scotch cap and mutter something about it's being a stroke of luck both ways, 'not one's more'n another's,' and eye me dully. I knew this man, by a glance at him, to be of a class of seamen who cannot talk without being questioned, so forthwith I began.

'What's your name, my man, so that I may know how to converse with you?'

'William Somers, sir,' he replied.

'I suppose the bo'sun has told you our story?'

'Yes, sir. Ye're a portion of the crew and passengers of the *Strathmore*, lost in a collision three nights agone, and was landed here yesterday mornin'.'

'Ay; and what brig is that?'

'The *Sarah Jane*, sir: in ballast, bound from the Cape of Good Hope to Wellington, New Zealand, from which port she sailed for Table Bay latter end o' August with a cargo of timber. Three weeks ago we was drove low south by a hurricane from the nor'east. We hove to under bare poles and drifted like a balloon, sir. Same night o' the gale a sea, broke over the vessel and washed the capt'n overboard and he was drowned. It likewise broke the leg of a man by flinging him agin the lee-bulwarks. It washed another man aft, and injured him hinternally. Them two have been disabled ever since. There was a man ill all the time with some kind o' fever; he took worse arter the gale had blowed itself out and died, and we buried him. Then last week the mate—he's an only mate, sir—who'd been ailing for some time, had to keep his bunk: he's been too ill to navigate the brig, and

I fear his time's nearly up, for there's no medicine aboard the vessel, and he don't seem to know what his complaint is.'

'How many men are there to work the brig?'

He fell to counting on his fingers: 'There war seven of a crew, hexcludin' the capt'n and mate. Two ill and one gone leaves four: one of 'em the cook who's no good aloft, and another a boy.'

'Are you capable of navigating the vessel?'

'No, sir.'

'Then how did you make your way here?'

'Why, the mate gave me the course and we steered and took our chance.'

'But what made you head for this island?'

'The mate hoped we might find help. He'd heard of vessels callin' here and trusted to get physic to do him good, likewise a couple of hands to assist in working the brig, and some one willin' to carry her to where she belongs—Wellington, New Zealand. He said there was no land nearer for hundreds and hundreds of miles. We've spoke only one vessel in five weeks—that were six days ago. She offered to take us off and turn the brig adrift, but I wur agin that and so was the mate, and she left us—in a rare hurry, it looked to me, as if she war opposed to our considerin' her offer too long.'

'You've lost your foretopgallantmast, I see.'

'She jumped it out of her in the storm, sir. Our two boats was smashed into staves. But that was all the injury. We lost no sails.'

The men sitting munching biscuit and preserved meat on the ground listened eagerly. I glanced from them to Florence, who was looking with pity at the rough seamen, and then said to him, 'Yours has been a hard case, Somers; not harder than ours, but hard enough for all that. But God be praised, we're both in luck. Here are hands enough to work that little hooker round the world, and in me, my lad, you behold an old fist at the sextant. But isn't it a wonderful thing to come about? Oh, Shilling,' I cried, 'it's more like a dream than the reality to see her there,' pointing to the brig.

'I felt it, Mr. Seymour, I felt it, sir,' he exclaimed, just swallowing a mouthful of biscuit, 'as I climbed over her side. Had the laniards I grasped dissolved in my hands and the brig faded out like a vision I shouldn't have been surprised; the wonder was to see her and to find her a real thing, something to stand upon and lean against.'

'And likewise may I say,' exclaimed Somers, addressing Shilling and the others, 'that when daylight come and I see ye all standin' here hailin' and hollerin', it pretty nigh took my breath away. I says to one of my mates, "Tom" I says, "why, there must be a village or town astern o' them rocks, and them

there are the inhabitants." "A town in your eye, William," says he; "if them men are not castaways I'll swaller my fingers." He wur right,' continued the man, gazing round at the towering slopes with the dull motion of an old seaman, and then staring with a kind of amazement at the hut up past us; 'but Lord! what should we have done if ye *hadn't* been here? Physic; there's ne'er a drop to be had in this place I should think; and as to ships callin', I don't see what they have to come for. What's there to eat? That soup an' bully,' said he, looking at the few remaining tins on the ground, 'and that there bread, came from your ship, I suppose?'

'Ay,' responded one of the men; 'there are no shops here, mate.'

'There's plenty o' bilin' water, but nothen to cook,' cried another.

'Why should wessels call?' continued Somers. 'Why, I never see such a hole of an island. The mate must have been wanderin' in his mind when he talked of gettin' help *here*.'

'Dunno about that,' said the bo'sun. 'If that's what ye call wanderin', it's the best stroke of sense he could ha' committed, both for us and for him.'

'Won't you sit down,' said I, 'and eat something?'

'No,' answered Somers, 'thanking ye all the same. There'll be some breakfast ready when I gets aboard.'

'How is the brig off for provisions?' said I.

'Pretty middling, I think,' he answered. 'But the cook'll be able to tell you what there is, sir.'

'Well, anyway we can fill up with fresh water,' I observed, 'and if there's such a thing as a gun aboard we might lay in a stock of goat's meat.'

'I believe ye'll find an old fowling-piece in the capt'n's cabin,' exclaimed the man, 'but I can't answer for powder. The boy'll know. But are there any goats here?' he added, rolling his eyes over the slopes; and then he muttered, 'Shivered if ever I see sitch a hole. *Here's* a place to come for physic!'

It was quite likely that this man had imagined St. Paul's to be an inhabited island: and at any other time I should have laughed at the face he put on as he turned his eyes up and down the slopes and round upon the margin of the lake, and then upon the hut, coming back to us with a dull stare of bewilderment. But the minutes were precious, as long before the hour of sunset I hoped to have put that lonely, inhospitable rock far astern; so addressing Shilling I said: 'Two of the men had better go to the hut and bring away the rest of the provisions there; jump into the gig and row the ladies and me aboard. You had best stop here, bo'sun, whilst I see if there's any ammunition for the fowling-piece Somers here speaks of. There'll be nine of us, without the boat's crew, remember, and if you and the others can

knock over a goat or two, the meat will not come amiss. I'll send you the gun if there are any balls and powder to be found. I'll also find out what fresh water there is aboard: it'll be a troublesome job to fill up from the slopes yonder, but it must be done. What think you of the weather?'

'Why, it looks as if it's goin' to be fine for ever,' he replied, gazing up at the sky.

I told two of the men to jump into the boat, and handed Aunt Damaris and Florence into the sternsheets. William Somers stowed himself away in the bows. The provisions which had been brought from the hut for breakfast—that is to say, as much as the nine of us had left of them—were passed to us, and we then shoved off, leaving the bo'sun and three sailors behind. I looked at Florence as we pulled through the breakwater and saw the towering cliffs of the island opening north and south whilst the sound of the surf came along in a clear low thunder; heard *here* as it was not to be noticed from the inside of the great hollow; and for the life of me I could not help letting go one of the yokelines to grasp and press her hand. A radiant expression came into her face as she whispered, 'Jack, we shall see dear old Clifton and home again, after all!'

'And afterwards, darling?' I asked her.

But if she had any answer to make to this, Aunt Damaris took it out of her mouth by crying, with her eyes fixed on the brig, 'What a tall short ship! Quite a tub, I declare. Will she be safe in a high sea, Mr. Seymour, do you think?'

'Ay, as safe as the *Strathmore*,' I replied.

'She ain't much of a hand at ratching, mum,' sung out William Somers from the bows; 'there's naught but sagging on a bowline in such a trim as hers; but as to bein' *safe*, ye should ha' seen the gale she carried us through. Never heerd of anything livelier; she'd ha' danced the fattest Dutchman as ever said yaw for yes out of his hammock, ay, even if he'd been lashed in it with the deep-sea lead atop of him to keep him down. True as I sit here, mum.'

We got the gig under her port main chains, which formed a convenient platform for the ladies, and by dint of lifting and hoisting, we handed Florence and her aunt over the side. The three fellows who had watched us coming pressed eagerly around us. Their faces were full of astonishment; had we been wildly-attired savages, such as had never been viewed in any part of the world before by mariners, their looks could not have expressed more amazement that came very near indeed to an expression of incredulity. I at once asked which of them was the cook; whereupon the grimmest of the three striking himself, answered 'Here, sir.'

'William Somers,' said I, 'tells me that your late captain had a fowling-piece—do you know if there's any ammunition on board?'

'You ought to be able to tell the gen'man, Dick,' exclaimed the cook, turning to one of the three, who was a youth of about sixteen.

'A' know there's a goon,' responded the boy, 'but a' can't say if there's ony pooder. I'll gan seek some.'

'Had away then,' cried the cook, and the boy ran into the cabin.

This was a deck-house extending abaft the mainmast. I could pretty well guess the *Sarah Jane's* age from the vestiges which remained of what had once been a gaudy front to this structure, even now not innocent of gilt, with little windows on either side a low door, like a small cottage, a red curtain in each window, and some queer devices painted green, forming a sort of frame for the quaint Dutch-like exterior. Past this deck-house on either hand went a narrow gangway; but from it to the house forward, where the men slept, was all clear deck, with a big main-hatch, a little winch, and a couple of old brake-pumps. Such a tub of a ship as this I had never before stood upon; I doubt if her length was more than three and a half times her beam; she had bulwarks as high as my shoulder; there was scarcely a piece of timber belonging to her that did not resemble the inside of a muffin, with the holes of decay and hard usage in it; and it would have made any sailor laugh to look aloft at the yards and spars which appeared to have belonged to vessels of different burden in their time. Nevertheless, when I felt that old deck under me, and saw the lonely island beyond lifting its great slopes into the sky, and then thought of what might have been the fate of the girl who stood near me glancing from here to there at the brig, but for the miracle of this old hooker's arrival, my heart swelled with gratitude, and not the proudest line-of-battle ship that ever reared her majestic heights of canvas to the clouds, could, at a time when all was well with me, have seemed so fair and noble an object in my sight as did this decayed, apple-bowed, timber-box in the morning of our release from a period of bitter suffering, and of fears deeper than despair.

In a few minutes the boy returned with an old fowling-piece, a flask of powder, and some balls. He had found the ammunition in a locker in the captain's berth, he told us, in a voice of triumph that sounded shrill with its north-country rattle.

'I suppose you have no fresh meat aboard?' said I to the cook.

'Not an ounce, sir.'

'Is there plenty of salt meat?' He answered, so much pork and so much beef, as near as he could guess without overhauling the stores.

'Then,' said I, 'it's plain enough we must lay in a stock of goat's flesh. What fresh water is there?'

Of this fortunately there was an abundance, a number of spare

cbssks having been taken aboard at the Cape, and filled to serve as ballast. This, as I say, was most fortunate, for the labour of obtaining a store from the wells up the hills would have been enormous, and must have detained us three or four days. I now told the boy and the other seaman that they could jump into the gig with the fowling-piece, and go ashore and help my men to kill as many goats as they could come at, and hunt for crabs and shellfish, and whatever provisions the rocks yielded. The poor fellows were delighted with the chance of a run ashore and tumbled briskly over the side. The cook looked as if he would like to join them, but I wished to have him aboard to tell me about the rest of the stores, etc., and to get the cabin to rights for the ladies. Will Somers also remained, and I asked him to step into the cabin where the mate lay, and ascertain how he was, and if he could speak with me. He returned after a short absence and said that the mate was very poorly indeed, but that he'd be glad if I'd see him. 'The first question he asked,' said Somers, 'was, if there's any chance of gettin' some medicine for his sickness; and when I shook my head, and told him I was afeard there was nothen to be done in that way in this mucking ileyand, his jaw dropped and 'twas pitiful to hear the groan he gave.'

The three of us followed the man into the deck-house, which I found to be a very plain old interior, quite in keeping with the rest of the brig. There was a table on the starboard side, with a cushioned locker running down it, and on the port side there went a bulkhead divided into three cabins, with a bit of a berth in the foremost end where, I afterwards learnt, were kept the sailmaker's gear, carpenter's chest, stuff used for the rigging, etc. It was a homely cabin indeed, a mere box of a place, with the carvings and jobbings of three or four generations of sailors upon the woodwork of it, four small circular windows over the table, and a little window in each cabin. If there had ever been a carpet it must have gone overboard during the gale. I asked Florence and her aunt to be seated, whilst I spoke to the mate; and on Somers indicating the man's cabin, which was the aftermost one, I knocked on the little door and entered.

A gleam of sunshine came through the window and slanted like a bar of silver from it to the deck; it filled the narrow compartment with a luminous haze that made seeing difficult for a moment or two, and then, behind the sunbeam as it might be, I made out a bunk with a man lying in it dressed in his drawers and shirt, with an old blanket drawn over his bare feet up to his knees.

There was a seaman's chest painted green in one corner: and on top of it a tin dish containing a piece of salt meat that looked to have been untasted. A broken clay pipe lay on the deck under the bunk. An old rusty pilot coat swung by a nail at the door, and near the chest was an empty metal wash-basin. The poor fellow lying in the bunk was a man of about thirty years of age; yet he

might have passed for fifty, so fearful was the havoc that pain and sickness had wrought in his face. His hair lay plentifully tossed upon the rude soiled bolster that pillowed his head: his eyes had the glazed look that incessant anguish gives; his lips were bloodless, and so fiercely had emaciation done its work that under the ragged beard, the growth of a few weeks only it looked to be, you could see the jawbone coming through the skin like the back of a knife and every vein and artery upon the forehead and under the eyes, and down past the ears on either side the throat stood out as standing rigging will under a wet sail blown hard against it.

'I am sorry,' said I, approaching him close and speaking softly, 'to find you in this state; and sorrier seeing that it is to you, under God, that there are nine of us, of whom two are ladies, who will be owing their preservation from heaven alone knows what fearful fate. What is your malady?'

'I don't know, sir,' he answered, in such a voice that it made a man feel cruel to be able to listen to it. 'I'd been ailing ever since we left the Cape: but it came on worse after the captain was washed overboard, and has made me what you see. I'm sure medicine would cure me: I am sure a doctor could make me a well man. Oh it's a dreadful thing to lie dying here alone—without help—so far from home. I'd not mind death if I could be buried ashore: but to think of being flung into the sea and left to float about there—oh, God have mercy upon me!'

'You mustn't think of *that*,' said I. 'You're a sailor, and have held your life in your hand too long, as all sailor men do, to give up whilst you've still got a grip of it. I've left my men ashore to kill some goats if they can come at them, and a mess of fresh meat should do you good,' said I, with a glance at the pale bit of salt meat in the tin: 'and when they've done that job, which needn't take them over long, we'll up anchor and head for the latitude of ships where we may get advice and medicine for you.'

He muttered something, with a rolling up of his eyes that left nothing but the whites of them visible, and methought, when I looked at him then, lads, that if ever death lying skulking inside of a live man and quietly doing its work there, came up and had a peep at you out of his face, it did out of that mate's, and God help me for the wild memory of it. Presently his eyes came back to their place, and he gazed at me sensibly.

'Is there any one of you,' says he, 'who can navigate this brig?'

'I can,' I replied; 'that is if you have the means aboard.'

'Oh, you'll find what you want in the captain's cabin, sir,' he exclaimed. 'But I fear the chronometer'll have stopped.'

'Then I must make shift to do without it,' said I. 'I am glad to hear there is plenty of fresh water aboard. Do you know what stock of provisions remains?'

'How many will there be of us altogether, sir?'

'Well, our party makes nine; and there are seven of you, counting the two disabled men and yourself—sixteen in all.'

He shut his eyes and lay awhile thinking; and the brightness coming down white off the gush of sunshine piercing the cabin window lay full upon his face and made him look the saddest corpse—for never did man seem deadlier as he lay with his eyes shut—that was ever launched off a ship's deck.

'I think,' said he, faintly, 'you'll find there'll be enough provisions to last out five weeks, by putting all hands on short allowance.'

'Not more?'

'I fancy not, sir. But the cook can overhaul the lazarette and let you know.'

If this were true, it was not comforting, though I will not say it was alarming either, for so long as we had plenty of fresh water the hardship of going upon a short allowance of provisions would not be very great; and it would be more than strange, indeed it would seem as if we were to be crushed and finally overwhelmed and destroyed by misfortune, if between this and five weeks we did not encounter help. After a short pause the mate asked me how I proposed to head.

'Why,' said I, 'for Australia. I don't see that we could do better. We have nothing but westerly winds in these seas to depend on.'

A sort of light came into his dim eyes and a wan smile played about his mouth. 'Oh,' said he, 'it does me good to talk to you, sir, to hear you speak of heading for Australia. There's a sound of life in your words, sir. I wish I was able to be on deck to help you. But you'll find William Somers a good steady man—you can safely trust him with the brig.'

'Ay,' said I, 'and besides I have a bo'sun of the *Strathmore*—a first-rate seaman. Don't trouble yourself about your inability to help me—I'm an old hand, and think I can show the *Sarah Jane* the road home. Meanwhile, pluck up heart and hope for the best, and depend upon it that if help can be obtained the first of it shall be given to you.' And so saying I took his hand, and pressed it, and left him.

(To be concluded.)

Honey-Dew.

PLACE, the garden. Time, summer. *Dramatis personæ*, a couple of small brown garden-ants, and a lazy clustering colony of wee green 'plant-lice,' or 'blight,' or aphides. The exact scene is usually on the young and succulent branches of a luxuriant rose-bush, into whose soft shoots the aphides have deeply buried their long trunk-like snouts, in search of the sap off which they live so contentedly through their brief lifetime. To them, enter the two small brown ants, their lawful possessors; for ants, too, though absolutely unrecognised by English law ('*de minimis non curat lex*,' says the legal aphorism), are nevertheless in their own commonwealth duly seised of many and various goods and chattels; and these same aphides, as everybody has heard, stand to them in pretty much the same position as cows stand to human herdsmen. Throw in for sole spectator a loitering naturalist, and you get the entire *mise-en-scène* of a quaint little drama that works itself out a dozen times among the wilted rose-trees beneath the latticed cottage windows every summer morning.

It is a delightful sight to watch the two little lilliputian proprietors approaching and milking these their wee green motionless cattle. First of all, the ants quickly scent their way with protruded antennæ (for they are as good as blind, poor things) up the prickly stem of the rose-bush, guided, no doubt, by the faint perfume exhaled from the nectar above them. Smelling their road cautiously to the ends of the branches, they soon reach their own particular aphides, whose bodies they proceed gently to stroke with their outstretched feelers, and then stand by quietly for a moment in happy anticipation of the coming dinner. Presently, the obedient aphid, conscious of its lawful master's friendly presence, begins slowly to emit from two long horn-like tubes near the centre of its back a couple of limpid drops of a sticky pale yellow fluid. Honey-dew our English rustics still call it, because, when the aphides are not milked often enough by ants, they discharge it awkwardly of their

own accord, and then it falls as a sweet clammy dew upon the grass beneath them. The ant, approaching the two tubes with cautious tenderness, removes the sweet drops without injuring in any way his little *protégé*, and then passes on to the next in order of his tiny cattle, leaving the aphid apparently as much relieved by the process as a cow with a full hanging udder is relieved by the timely attention of the human milkmaid.

Evidently, this is a case of mutual accommodation in the political economy of the ants and aphides: a free interchange of services between the ant as consumer and the aphid as producer. Why the aphides should have acquired the curious necessity for getting rid of this sweet, sticky, and nutritious secretion nobody knows with certainty; but it is at least quite clear that the liquid is a considerable nuisance to them in their very sedentary and monotonous existence—a waste product of which they are anxious to disembarass themselves as easily as possible—and that while they themselves stand to the ants in the relation of purveyors of food supply, the ants in return stand to them in the relation of scavengers, or contractors for the removal of useless accumulations.

Everybody knows the aphides well by sight, in one of their forms at least, the familiar rose aphid; but probably few people ever look at them closely and critically enough to observe how very beautiful and wonderful is the organisation of their tiny limbs in all its exquisite detail. If you pick off one good-sized wingless insect, however, from a blighted rose-leaf, and put him on a glass slide under a low power of the microscope, you will most likely be quite surprised to find what a lovely little creature it is that you have been poisoning wholesale all your life long with diluted tobacco-juice. His body is so transparent that you can see through it by transmitted light: a dainty glass globe, you would say, of emerald green, set upon six tapering, jointed, hairy legs, and provided in front with two large black eyes of many facets, and a pair of long and very flexible antennæ, easily moved in any direction, but usually bent backward when the creature is at rest so as to reach nearly to his tail as he stands at ease upon his native rose-leaf. There are, however, two other features about him which specially attract attention, as being very characteristic of the aphides and their allies among all other insects. In the first place, his mouth is provided with a very long snout or proboscis, classically described as a rostrum, with which he pierces the outer skin of the rose-shoot where he lives,

and sucks up incessantly its sweet juices. This organ is common to the aphid with all the other bugs and plant-lice. In the second place, he has half-way down his back (or a little more) a pair of very peculiar hollow organs, the honey tubes, from which exudes that singular secretion, the honey dew. These tubes are not found in quite all species of aphides, but they are very common among the class, and they form by far the most conspicuous and interesting organs in all those aphides which do possess them.

The life-history of the rose-aphid, small and familiar as is the insect itself, forms one of the most marvellous and extraordinary chapters in all the fairy tales of modern science. Nobody need wonder why the blight attacks his roses so persistently when once he has learnt the unusual provision for exceptional fertility in the reproduction of these insect plagues. The whole story is too long to give at full length, but here is a brief recapitulation of a year's generations of common aphides.

In the spring, the eggs of last year's crop, which have been laid by the mothers in nooks and crannies out of reach of the frost, are quickened into life by the first return of warm weather, and hatch out their brood of insects. All this brood consists of imperfect females, without a single male among them; and they all fasten at once upon the young buds of their native bush, where they pass a sluggish and uneventful existence in sucking up the juice from the veins on the one hand, and secreting honey-dew upon the other. Four times they moult their skins, these moults being in some respects analogous to the metamorphosis of the caterpillar into chrysalis and butterfly. After the fourth moult, the young aphides attain maturity; and then they give origin, parthenogenetically, to a second brood, also of imperfect females, all produced without any fathers. This second brood brings forth in like manner a third generation, asexual, as before; and the same process is repeated without intermission as long as the warm weather lasts. In each case, the young simply bud out from the ovaries of the mothers, exactly as new crops of leaves bud out from the rose-branch on which they grow. Eleven generations have thus been observed to follow one another rapidly in a single summer; and indeed by keeping the aphides in a warm room, one may even make them continue their reproduction in this purely vegetative fashion for as many as four years running. But as soon as the cold weather begins to set in, perfect male and female insects are produced by the last swarm of parthenogenetic mothers; and these true females, after being fertilised, lay the

eggs which remain through the winter, and from which the next summer's broods have to begin afresh the wonderful cycle. Thus, only one generation of aphides, out of ten or eleven, consists of true males and females: all the rest are false females, producing young by a process of budding.

Setting aside for the present certain special modifications of this strange cycle which have been lately described by M. Jules Lichtenstein, let us consider for a moment what can be the origin and meaning of such an unusual and curious mode of reproduction.

The aphides are on the whole the most purely inactive and vegetative of all insects, unless indeed we except a few very debased and degraded parasites. They fasten themselves early in life on to a particular shoot of a particular plant; they drink in its juices, digest them, grow, and undergo their incomplete metamorphoses: they produce new generations with extraordinary rapidity: and they vegetate, in fact, almost as much as the plant itself upon which they are living. Their existence is duller than that of the very dullest cathedral city. They are thus essentially degenerate creatures: they have found the conditions of life too easy for them, and they have reverted to something so low and simple that they are almost plant-like in some of their habits and peculiarities.

The ancestors of the aphides were free winged insects; and, in certain stages of their existence, most living species of aphides possess at least some winged members. On the rose-bush, you can generally pick off a few such larger winged forms, side by side with the wee green wingless insects. But creatures which have taken to passing most of their life upon a single spot on a single plant hardly need the luxury of wings; and so, in nine cases out of ten, natural selection has dispensed with those needless encumbrances. Even the legs are comparatively little wanted by our modern aphides, which only require them to walk away in a stately sleepy manner when rudely disturbed by man, lady-birds, or other enemies; and indeed the legs are now very weak and feeble, and incapable of walking for more than a short distance at a time under exceptional provocation. The eyes remain, it is true; but only the big ones: the little ocelli at the top of the head, found amongst so many of their allies, are quite wanting in all the aphides. In short, the plant-lice have degenerated into mere mouths and sacks for sucking and storing food from the tissues of plants, provided with large honey-tubes for getting rid of the waste sugar.

Now, the greater the amount of food any animal gets, and the less the amount of expenditure it performs in muscular action, the greater will be the surplus it has left over for the purposes of reproduction. Eggs or young, in fact, represent the amount thus left over after all the wants of the body have been provided for. But in the rose-aphis the wants of the body, when once the insect has reached its full growth, are absolutely nothing; and it therefore then begins to bud out new generations in rapid succession as fast as ever it can produce them. This is strictly analogous to what we see every day taking place in all the plants around us. New leaves are produced one after another, as fast as material can be supplied for their nutrition, and each of these new leaves is known to be a separate individual, just as much as the individual aphis. At last, however, a time comes when the reproductive power of the plant begins to fail, and then it produces flowers, that is to say stamens (male) and pistils (female), whose union results in fertilisation and the subsequent outgrowth of fruit and seeds. Thus a year's cycle of the plant-lice exactly answers to the life-history of an ordinary annual. The eggs correspond to the seeds: the various generations of aphides budding out from one another by parthenogenesis correspond to the leaves budded out by one another throughout the summer; and the final brood of perfect males and females answers to the flower with its stamen and pistils, producing the seeds, as they produce the eggs, for setting up afresh the next year's cycle.

This consideration, I fancy, suggests to us the most probable explanation of the honey-tubes and honey-dew. Creatures that eat so much and reproduce so fast as the aphides are rapidly sucking up juices all the time from the plant on which they fasten, and converting most of the nutriment so absorbed into material for fresh generations. That is how they swarm so fast over all our shrubs and flowers. But if there is any one kind of material in their food in excess of their needs, they would naturally have to secrete it by a special organ developed or enlarged for the purpose. I don't mean that the organ would or could be developed all at once, by a sudden effort, but that as the habit of fixing themselves upon plants and sucking their juices grew from generation to generation with these descendants of originally winged insects, an organ for permitting the waste product to exude must necessarily have grown side by side with it. Sugar seems to have been such a waste product, contained in the juices of the plant to an extent beyond what the aphides could assimilate or use up in the produc-

tion of new broods ; and this sugar is therefore secreted by special organs, the honey-tubes. One can readily imagine that it may at first have escaped in small quantities, and that two pores on their last segment but two may have been gradually specialised into regular secreting organs, perhaps under the peculiar agency of the ants, who have regularly appropriated so many kinds of aphides as miniature milch cows.

So completely have some species of ants come to recognise their own proprietary interest in the persons of the aphides, that they provide them with fences and cow-sheds on the most approved human pattern. Sometimes they build up covered galleries to protect their tiny cattle ; and these galleries lead from the nest to the place where the aphides are fixed, and completely enclose the little creatures from all chance of harm. If intruders try to attack the farmyard, the ants drive them away by biting and lacerating them. Sir John Lubbock, who has paid great attention to the mutual relations of ants and aphides, has even shown that various kinds of ants domesticate various species of aphids. The common brown garden-ant, one of the darkest skinned among our English races, 'devotes itself principally to aphides which frequent twigs and leaves ;' especially, so far as I have myself observed, the bright green aphid of the rose, and the closely allied little black aphid of the broad bean. On the other hand, a nearly related reddish ant pays attention chiefly to those aphides which live on the bark of trees, while the yellow meadow ants, a far more subterranean species, keep flocks and herds of the like-minded aphides which feed upon the roots of herbs and grasses.

Sir John Lubbock, indeed, even suggests—and how the suggestion would have charmed 'Civilisation' Buckle!—that to this difference of food and habit the distinctive colours of the various species may very probably be due. The ground which he adduces for this ingenious idea is a capital example of the excellent use to which out-of-the-way evidence may be cleverly put by a competent evolutionary thinker. 'The Baltic amber,' he says, 'contains among the remains of many other insects a species of ant intermediate between our small brown garden-ants and the little yellow meadow-ants. This is possibly the stock from which these and other allied species are descended. One is tempted to suggest that the brown species which live so much in the open air, and climb up trees and bushes, have retained and even deepened their dark colour ; while others, such as the yellow meadow-ant, which lives almost entirely below ground, have become much paler.' He might

have added, as confirmatory evidence, the fact that the perfect winged males and females of the yellow species, which fly about freely during the brief honeymoon in the open air, are even darker in hue than the brown garden-ant. But how the light colour of the neuter workers gets transmitted through these dusky parents from one generation to another is part of that most insoluble crux of all evolutionary reasoning—the transmission of special qualities to neuters by parents who have never possessed them.

This last-mentioned yellow meadow-ant has carried the system of domestication further in all probability than any other species among its congeners. Not only do the yellow ants collect the root-feeding aphides in their own nests, and tend them as carefully as their own young, but they also gather and guard the eggs of the aphides, which, till they come to maturity, are of course quite useless. Sir John Lubbock found that his yellow ants carried the winter eggs of a species of aphid into their nest, and there took great care of them. In the spring, the eggs hatched out; and the ants actually carried the young aphides out of the nest again, and placed them on the leaves of a daisy growing in the immediate neighbourhood. They then built up a wall of earth over and round them. The aphides went on in their usual lazy fashion throughout the summer, and in October they laid another lot of eggs, precisely like those of the preceding autumn. This case, as the practised observer himself remarks, is an instance of prudence unexampled, perhaps, in the animal kingdom, outside man. 'The eggs are laid early in October on the food-plant of the insect. They are of no direct use to the ants; yet they are not left where they are laid, exposed to the severity of the weather and to innumerable dangers, but brought into their nests by the ants, and tended by them with the utmost care through the long winter months until the following March, when the young ones are brought out again and placed on the young shoots of the daisy.' Mr. White of Stonehouse has also noted an exactly similar instance of formican providence.

The connection between so many ants and so many species of aphides being so close and intimate, it does not seem extravagant to suppose that the honey-tubes in their existing advanced form at least may be due to the deliberate selective action of these tiny insect-breeders. Indeed, when we consider that there are certain species of beetles which have never been found anywhere except in ants' nests, it appears highly probable that these domesticated forms have been produced by the ants themselves,

exactly as the dog, the sheep, and the cow, in their existing types, have been produced by deliberate human selection. If this be so, then there is nothing very out-of-the-way in the idea that the ants have also produced the honey-tubes of aphides by their long selective action. It must be remembered that ants, in point of antiquity, date back, under one form or another, no doubt to a very remote period of geological time. Their immense variety of genera and species (over a thousand distinct kinds are known) show them to be a very ancient family, or else they would not have had time to be specially modified in such a wonderful multiformity of ways. Even as long ago as the time when the tertiary deposits of Eningen and Radoboj were laid down, Dr. Heer of Zurich has shown that at least eighty-three distinct species of ants already existed; and the number that have left no trace behind is most probably far greater. Some of the beetles and woodlice which ants domesticate in their nests have been kept underground so long that they have become quite blind—that is to say, have ceased altogether to produce eyes, which would be of no use to them in their subterranean galleries; and one such blind beetle, known as *Claviger*, has even lost the power of feeding itself, and has to be fed by its masters from their own mandibles. Dr. Taschenberg enumerates 300 species of true ants'-nest insects, mostly beetles, in Germany alone; and M. André gives a list of 584 kinds, habitually found in association with ants in one country or another. Compared with these singular results of formican selection, the mere production or further development of the honey-tubes appears to be a very small matter.

But what good do the aphides themselves derive from the power of secreting honey-dew. For we know now that no animal or plant is ever provided with any organ or part merely for the benefit of another creature: the advantage must at least be mutual. Well, in the first place, it is likely that, in any case, the amount of sugary matter in the food of the aphides is quite in excess of their needs; they assimilate the nitrogenous material of the sap, and secrete its saccharine material as honey-dew. That, however, would hardly account for the development of special secretory ducts, like the honey-tubes, in which you can actually see the little drops of honey rolling, under the microscope. But the ants are useful allies to the aphides, in guarding them from another very dangerous type of insect. They are subject to the attacks of an ichneumon fly, which lays its eggs in them, meaning its larvæ to feed upon their living bodies; and the ants watch over the

aphides with the greatest vigilance, driving off the ichneumons whenever they approach their little *protégés*.

Many other insects besides ants, however, are fond of the sweet secretions of the aphides, and it is probable that the honey-dew thus acts to some extent as a preservative of the species, by diverting possible foes from the insects themselves, to the sugary liquid which they distil from their food-plants. Having more than enough and to spare for all their own needs, and the needs of their offspring, the plant-lice can afford to employ a little of their nutriment as a bribe to secure them from the attacks of possible enemies. Such compensatory bribes are common enough in the economy of nature. Thus our common English vetch secretes a little honey on the stipules or wing-like leaflets on the stem, and so distracts thieving ants from committing their depredations upon the nectaries in the flowers, which are intended for the attraction of the fertilising bees; and a South American acacia, as Mr. Belt has shown, bears hollow thorns and produces honey from a gland in each leaflet, in order to allure myriads of small ants which nest in the thorns, eat the honey, and repay the plant by driving away their leaf-cutting congeners. Indeed, as they sting violently, and issue forth in enormous swarms whenever the plant is attacked, they are even able to frighten off browsing cattle from their own peculiar acacia.

Aphides, then, are essentially degraded insects, which have become almost vegetative in their habits, and even in their mode of reproduction, but which still retain a few marks of their original descent from higher and more locomotive ancestors. Their wings, especially, are useful to the perfect forms in finding one another, and to the imperfect ones in migrating from one plant to its nearest neighbours, where they soon become the parents of fresh hordes in rapid succession. Hence various kinds of aphides are among the most dreaded plagues of agriculturists. The 'fly' which Kentish farmers know so well on hops, is an aphid specialised for that particular bine; and when once it appears in the gardens, it spreads with startling rapidity from one end of the long rows to the other. The phylloxera which has spoilt the French vineyards is a root-feeding form that attacks the vine, and kills or maims the plant terribly, by sucking the vital juices on their way up into the fresh-forming foliage. The 'American blight' on apple trees is yet another member of the same family, a wee creeping cottony creature that hides among the fissures of the bark, and drives its very long beak far down into the green sappy layer underlying the

dead outer covering. In fact, almost all the best-known 'blights' and bladder-forming insects are aphides of one kind or another, affecting leaves, or stalk, or roots, or branches.

It is one of the most remarkable examples of the limitation of human powers that while we can easily exterminate large animals like the wolf and the bear in England, or the puma and the wolverine in the settled States of America, we should be so comparatively weak against the Colorado beetle or the fourteen-year locust, and so absolutely powerless against the hop-fly, the turnip-fly, and the phylloxera. The smaller and the more insignificant our enemy, viewed individually, the more difficult is he to cope with in the mass. All the elephants in the world could have been hunted down and annihilated, in all probability, with far less labour than has been expended upon one single little all but microscopic parasite in France alone. The enormous rapidity of reproduction in the family of aphides is the true cause of our helplessness before them. It has been calculated that a single aphis may during its own lifetime become the progenitor of 5,904,900,000 descendants. Each imperfect female produces about ninety young ones, and lives long enough to see its children's children to the fifth generation. Now ninety multiplied by ninety four times over gives the number above stated. Of course, this makes no allowance for casualties, which must be pretty frequent: but even so, the sum-total of aphides produced within a small garden in a single summer must be something very extraordinary.

It is curious, too, that aphides on the whole seem to escape the notice of insect-eating birds very tolerably. I cannot, in fact, discover that birds ever eat them, their chief real enemy being the little lizard-like larva of the lady-bird, which devours them everywhere greedily in immense numbers. Indeed, aphides form almost the sole food of the entire lady-bird tribe in their earlier stages of existence: and there is no better way of getting rid of blight on roses and other garden plants than to bring in a good boxful of these active and voracious little grubs from the fields and hedges. They will pounce upon the aphides forthwith as a cat pounces upon the mice in a well-stocked barn or farmyard. The two-spotted lady-bird in particular is the determined exterminator of the destructive hop-fly, and is much beloved accordingly by Kentish farmers. No doubt, one reason why birds do not readily see the aphis of the rose and most other species is because of their prevailing green tint, and the close way in which

they stick to the leaves or shoots on whose juices they are preying. But in the case of many black and violet species, this protection of imitative colour is wanting, and yet the birds do not seem to care for the very conspicuous little insects on the broad bean, for example, whose dusky hue makes them quite noticeable in large masses. Here there may very likely be some special protection of nauseous taste in the aphides themselves (I will confess that I have not ventured to try the experiment in person), as in many other instances we know that conspicuously-coloured insects advertise their nastiness, as it were, to the birds by their own integuments, and so escape being eaten in mistake for any of their less protected relatives.

On the other hand, it seems pretty clear that certain plants have efficiently armed themselves against the aphides, in turn, by secreting bitter or otherwise unpleasant juices. So far as I can discover, the little plunderers seldom touch the pungent 'nasturtiums' or *tropæolums* of our flower-gardens, even when these grow side by side with other plants on which the aphides are swarming. Often, indeed, I find winged forms upon the leaf-stem of a nasturtium, having come there evidently in hopes of starting a new colony; but usually in a dead or dying condition—the pungent juice seems to have poisoned them. So, too, spinach and lettuce may be covered with blight, while the bitter spurges, the woolly-leaved arabis, and the strong-scented thyme close by are utterly untouched. Plants seem to have acquired all these devices, such as close networks of hair upon the leaves, strong essences, bitter or pungent juices, and poisonous principles, mainly as deterrents for insect enemies, of which caterpillars and plant-lice are by far the most destructive. It would be unpardonable, of course, to write about honey-dew without mentioning tobacco; and I may add parenthetically that aphides are determined anti-tobacconists, nicotine, in fact, being a deadly poison to them. Smoking with tobacco, or sprinkling with tobacco-water, are familiar modes of getting rid of the unwelcome intruders in gardens. Doubtless this peculiar property of the tobacco plant has been developed as a prophylactic against insect enemies: and if so, we may perhaps owe the weed itself, as a smokable leaf, to the little aphides. Granting this hypothetical connection, the name of honey-dew would indeed be a peculiarly appropriate one. I may mention in passing that tobacco is quite fatal to almost all insects, a fact which I present gratuitously to the blowers of counterblasts, who are at liberty to make whatever use they choose

of it. Quassia and aloes are also well-known preventives of fly or blight in gardens.

The most complete life-history yet given of any member of the aphid family is that which M. Jules Lichtenstein has worked out with so much care in the case of the phylloxera of the oak-tree. In April, the winter eggs of this species, laid in the bark of an oak, each hatch out a wingless imperfect female, which M. Lichtenstein calls the foundress. After moulting four times, the foundress produces, by parthenogenesis, a number of false eggs, which it fastens to the leaf-stalks and under side of the foliage. These false eggs hatch out a larval form, wingless, but bigger than any of the subsequent generations; and the larvæ so produced themselves once more give origin to more larvæ, which acquire wings, and fly away from the oak on which they were born to another of a different species in the same neighbourhood. There these larvæ of the second crop once more lay false eggs, from which the third larval generation is developed. This brood is again wingless, and it proceeds at once to bud out several generations more, by internal gemmation, as long as the warm weather lasts. According to M. Lichtenstein, all previous observations have been made only on aphides of this third type; and he maintains that every species in the whole family really undergoes an analogous alternation of generations. At last, when the cold weather begins to set in, a fourth larval form appears, which soon obtains wings, and flies back to the same kind of oak on which the foundresses were first hatched out, all the intervening generations having passed their lives in sucking the juices of the other oak to which the second larval form migrated. The fourth type here produce perfect male and female insects, which are wingless, and have no sucking apparatus. The females, after being impregnated, lay a single egg each, which they hide in the bark, where it remains during the winter, till in spring it once more hatches out into a foundress, and the whole cycle begins over again. Whether all the aphides do or do not pass through corresponding stages is not yet quite certain. But Kentish farmers believe that the hop-fly migrates to hop-bines from plum-trees in the neighbourhood; and M. Lichtenstein considers that such migrations from one plant to another are quite normal in the family. We know, indeed, that many great plagues of our crops are thus propagated, sometimes among closely related plants, but sometimes also among the most widely separated species. For example, turnip-fly (which is not a aphid, but a small beetle) always begins its ravages (as Miss

Ormerod has abundantly shown) upon a plot of charlock, and then spreads from patches of that weed to the neighbouring turnips, which are slightly diverse members of the same genus. But on the other hand it has long been well known that rust in wheat is specially connected with the presence of the barberry bush; and it has recently been proved that the fungus which produces the disease passes its early stages on the barberry leaves, and only migrates in later generations to the growing wheat. This last case brings even more prominently into light than ever the essential resemblance of the aphides to plant-parasites.

GRANT ALLEN.

Armand Carrel.

An enslaved and frivolous people requires bread and the games of the circus :
a free nation must have bread and the newspaper.—LOUSTALOT.

A FEW weeks back we read in one of the daily papers that a very small pension has just been granted to the widow of Armand Carrel, the great French journalist, who died forty-eight years ago in the reign of Louis Philippe.

There is no fear of Carrel's being forgotten in France, but in this country it is doubtful whether his name conveys much to the mind beyond a vague impression of his being killed in a duel.

Armand Carrel was born in 1800. His father, a Rouen tradesman, sent him to the military school of St. Cyr on account of his absorbing desire to be a soldier. Here he spent all his leisure in reading history. It is said that he was the most popular boy in the school, but was no favourite with the masters, who found him unruly and difficult to manage.

When he left St. Cyr he joined the 29th regiment of the line as a sub-lieutenant. Unfortunately, his haughty temper and unbending will unfitted him for the life that best suited his inclinations, and he was always in difficulties with his commanding officers.

While with the regiment at Marseilles he wrote articles on military tactics in the local newspapers, and actually went so far as to criticise the conduct of his colonel. Not content with this infraction of discipline, he addressed a letter of advice to the Spanish Cortes on political matters. After grave deliberations at head-quarters, it was decided that the refractory young sub-lieutenant should be dismissed from the service without his pay.

Being relieved of his military duties, and still wishing to lead the life of a soldier, he went to Spain as a volunteer, for which on his return to France some months later he narrowly escaped being condemned to death by a court-martial.

It was a time of military conspiracies, and the authorities were always disposed to take an extreme view of any act that could be twisted into desertion, and to overlook the fact that

when an officer is dismissed from the army he becomes a civilian, and is free to go where he likes.

Carrel was now out of employment, and it was suggested to him to apply for the office of secretary to M. Augustin Thierry, whose great work on the 'History of the Conquest of England by the Normans' was advancing towards completion. The historian's eyesight was failing, and he was in need of literary assistance. Carrel's services were promptly accepted, and he received a salary equivalent to his pay as a sub-lieutenant.

Six months after he had entered upon his new duties a publisher asked M. Thierry for a short History of Scotland. The kind-hearted author recognised his secretary's talent and gladly availed himself of this opportunity of giving him a start by handing the task over to him, merely looking over it himself and writing a few lines by way of introduction.

The book was a success, and, elated by his good fortune, Carrel tendered his resignation as paid secretary to M. Thierry, whose history was now before the world, and determined to devote himself to literature. He still spent the greater part of his time in the congenial society of his former employer, at whose suggestion he undertook a History of Modern Greece. Thierry gave him the idea and lent him the necessary books, but the work itself was Carrel's own.

The venture succeeded, and the young writer now began to feel that, with his pen in his hand, he could fight his way to independence and honour. But the pen finds freer scope in the periodical press than in the 8vo or 12mo volume, and Carrel turned his attention to politics and the topics of the day, and began to be known as an article writer in the magazines and newspapers.

About this time we come to a singular incident in his life. His parents were urging him to do something in the way of business, not considering the career of a man of letters as any profession at all; and upon their supplying the funds he actually consented to open a bookseller's shop. As may be supposed, the experiment was not a lucrative one, and after a few months the shutters were closed. Probably intending customers were frightened away by the sight of the grave young man seated at the counter, which was strewn with papers and writing materials, with his eyes intently fixed on the inkstand, and considerably made their purchases elsewhere in order not to disturb him at his studies. He was writing his 'History of the

Counter Revolution in England'—a remarkable work, in which, though he purposely avoided drawing a parallel between the Stuarts and the Bourbons, the likeness came out in every page, leaving on the mind of the reader the impression of a veiled attack on the restoration, and a prophecy of the downfall of the reigning family. The book was published in February 1827 and became popular at once.

But Carrel's great work was the daily newspaper *Le National*, founded by him in conjunction with Thiers and Mignet on January 1, 1830. The first idea of it was his, and it was he who suggested the title.

Charles X., who was now on the throne, was even more disliked than his brother had been. At the Restoration, France had to submit to the indignity of accepting a king imposed upon her by foreign bayonets; but though Louis XVIII. gave dissatisfaction by his retrograde policy, at his death in 1824 there were many who made excuses for him on account of his advanced age and infirmities. Unfortunately, Charles X. was only three years younger, being sixty-seven when he came to the throne, and it was at once perceived that he was too old to learn. He made no effort to understand the spirit of the time, and was quite out of harmony with the aspirations of his countrymen. His predominant feeling was a passionate yearning for the past, and his dream was to restore the French monarchy in all its ancient splendour.

At Rheims he received the crown from the hands of the archbishop, with a regal pomp and ceremony altogether out of keeping with the ideas of the age, so that the coronation scene deeply offended the national sentiment.

It was a bad beginning, and he made matters worse as he went on; for, having a notion that Louis XVI. had lost his head because he was too yielding, he made up his mind not to yield at all. There could be but one end to this course of policy, and accordingly, after a series of conflicts, he was compelled to abdicate, and the Duke of Orleans was elected by the Chamber in his stead. It was a curious coincidence that France should have three monarchs in succession over fifty years of age when they began to reign. Louis XVIII. was sixty, Charles X. sixty-seven, and Louis Philippe fifty-three.

The new king was considered by most to be a suitable candidate. He had always adopted the national colours and professed Liberal sentiments, while the remarkably adventurous life that he had led imparted an additional interest to his person. He had

not always been clothed in purple and fine linen, nor fared sumptuously every day. He had fought at Valmy and Jemappes, had been to New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Havannah and the Bahamas, had taught in a school in Switzerland, and had wandered over the greater part of Europe, under an assumed name, with very little money in his pocket.

What did more than anything else to place him on the throne was the publication of the famous ordinances on July 26, 1830, rescinding the liberty of the press, and annulling the last elections. This was more than Paris could stand. The journalists assembled tumultuously in the office of the *National*; a protest was drawn up by Thiers and Mignet and signed by all the rest.¹ The king had disregarded the warning of his friends, and experienced courtiers turned pale on reading the ordinances of July, by which the constitution of the country was suspended. Public opinion was unanimous for once, and the capital took up arms in defence of her liberties. Barricades were thrown up, the troops were called out, and every street became a battle-field. The contest lasted three days. Whole regiments went over to the popular side, and Charles X. took his way into exile for the third time.

When Louis Philippe came to the throne, the journalists were at the head of the victorious party, and thus began the immense power exercised by the press throughout the whole reign.

During the first year of its existence, the *National* was conducted by Thiers, the second year by Mignet. Then, when the two historians took office under the new Government, they handed over the editorship to Carrel. They could not have left the paper in better hands. Carrel conducted the *National* with a freedom and spirit never before known in France, and under his guidance it became the ablest and most influential political journal of the time. Armand Carrel was the first to recognise the power and importance of that great test of all free institutions, the daily newspaper. *Le style c'est l'homme* was in his case literally true, for his style was like his character—strong, calm and severe; he appealed to the best sympathies of his countrymen, and his noble nature shone out in everything he wrote. He treated his adversaries with contempt as long as they were powerful, but was always ready to be generous to them when they were fallen or conquered.

He was called the Bayard of the Press, without fear and without reproach. He was a soldier at heart, and it was said of him

¹ The text of the 'Protest of the Journalists' is given at the end of vol. i. of Louis Blanc's *History of Ten Years*.

that he wrote with the point of the sword, so sharp and incisive were his polished sentences.

The chief characteristic of his style was quiet emphasis. He was not thinking of rounding his periods, but of convincing his readers, and it is this concentration of thought and absorption in his subject that constitutes the charm of his articles. He was great as a writer simply because he never thought of himself as a writer at all. With such qualities, it is not surprising that he obtained unbounded influence over the French mind, and an unrivalled power of carrying the sympathies of his fellow citizens along with him. 'What does Carrel think?' was always the first question asked. In appearance he was more like a military man than a journalist, with his erect stature, piercing glance and intrepid bearing. His conversation was like his writing—forceful, self-possessed, and energetic.

Carrel supported the new Government as long as he could consistently do so, but after a while the schoolmaster king seemed to grow weary of well-doing, and grievously disappointed the expectations of France.

When the 'promises of July' became a byword, when political writers were thrown into prison, and even the printers subjected to heavy fines, the *National* could no longer maintain silence. Then it was that Carrel spoke up bravely, and declared the authorities guilty of unlawful tyranny.

In January 1832 he wrote a bold article, signed with his name, saying: 'As regards publications, the case of "flagrant délit" only exists when a call to revolt is printed or war levied on the Government; it therefore does not apply to periodicals unless in time of revolution. A single man with a stout heart may rouse the whole press to resistance, and every writer possessed of any sense of his dignity as a citizen will oppose law to lawlessness and force to force. "Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra!" This vigorous protest was hailed with such an outburst of journalistic enthusiasm as had never before been witnessed in France, for everyone knew that the writer was a man of his word, and would act up to his motto. Alphonse Esquiros says: 'When Armand Carrel in the *National* upheld the cause of individual liberty against the iniquitous system of arbitrary arrest, and defied the Government with a pistol on the table, he was more than a man, he was the principle of justice incarnate.'¹ None knew better than he that the true emblem of liberty is the printing press.

¹ *Les Martyrs de la Liberté*, par Alphonse Esquiros. Paris, 1856.

The spirit of resistance thus raised throughout France stimulated article writers to ever-increasing activity. Press prosecutions still continued, but the people rallied round their champions, and more than once the heavy fines inflicted on editors and printers were paid by public subscription.

Armand Carrel was now in the plenitude of his powers, and might for many years have served his country as a leader of political thought, had it not been for a disastrous duel into which he was provoked by M. Emile de Girardin. He was brave to a fault; and, on the ground that the advanced guard of an army is the most exposed, always considered that he carried his life in his hand. But for so valuable a life as his to be thus thrown away, was as if a general should be slain not in fair and open fight but in a miserable skirmish outside the lines. The duel is a survival of the Middle Ages as irrational as it is barbarous, for it proves nothing and settles nothing.

Carrel thought he was defending the dignity of the press by protesting against a daily newspaper, whose mission it is to give political instruction to the people, being converted into a mere financial speculation by being chiefly filled with advertisements in order to bring it down to half-price; but to allow a public discussion to degenerate into a personal quarrel is a sad mistake, and the pen is the only weapon with which journalists ought to fight.

The meeting took place at Vincennes on July 22, 1836, at half-past six in the morning. Carrel was mortally wounded, and was taken to the house of an old schoolfellow at St. Mandé, where he expired two days afterwards, surrounded by his friends.

The news of his death spread consternation everywhere, and was the occasion of a national mourning. The country had sustained an irreparable loss. He was buried in the cemetery of St. Mandé, where his tomb is adorned by a bronze statue, the work of David of Angers, the sculptor. Popular as his courage and talent had rendered him, Carrel left a still deeper impression on the mind of his time by the moral beauty and chivalrous nobleness of his character than by his writings. There can be no more striking instance of the power of the pen than the career of this dauntless champion of a free press, without which, as Mirabeau declared, all other liberty is a vain word.

GERTRUDE LAYARD.

Anecdote of a Mouse.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

THE following passage in the Rev. J. G. Wood's 'Homes without Hands' reminds me of an incident so curious, that I think it is worthy of being recorded.

'Mice always' (says Mr. Wood, p. 195) 'make very comfortable nests for their young, gathering together great quantities of wool, rags, paper, hair, moss, feathers, and similar substances, and rolling them into a ball-like mass, in the middle of which the young are placed.'

Very many years ago, when I was living as a boy in a country vicarage in Yorkshire, I heard my mother say that a bank note, which she had laid on a shelf in a store-room, always kept locked by herself, had suddenly vanished. Our servants were quite above suspicion, and, on the other hand, the facts that the note had been laid in that particular place, and had disappeared, admitted of no doubt whatever.

After some search in the store-room, and the removal of most of the things in it, it was noticed that there was a mouse-hole in a corner of the floor. A happy thought suggested itself, that this should be explored. Accordingly a carpenter was sent for, and I have a very vivid recollection of standing by while a board was taken up, and the man's arm extended underneath it up to the shoulder. Immense quantities—I remember two large jars being quite filled—of minute bits of paper were drawn out, the accumulation, probably, of very many years. Strange to say, in one corner of the heap he got hold of a nest of young mice, and brought them out *lying on the bank note!* It was wholly uninjured, except from a slight stain; not the smallest portion had been nibbled away, and it was absolutely the only piece of paper left entire in all that heap.

It happened, then, that the mouse had carried the note, folded up as it was, through its hole, and then unfolded and spread it out as a lining to its nest, and had used it as a blanket, evidently conscious of its softness and flexibility. The really wonderful

part of the story is the leaving of this one piece of paper entire, apparently because it was of a different texture from the rest.

I can vouch for the above facts having occurred exactly as I have described them.

It appears to me that Instinct may be defined as 'hereditary habituation,' and Reason as 'knowledge of the consequences of action' (which will include moral responsibility). A feeling of softness for its nest was natural to the mouse; a material already soft and yielding had not to be made so by gnawing and nibbling. In this case, evidently, instinct will satisfy all the conditions of what seems, at first sight, exceptional intelligence.

F. A. PALEY.

Romance of an Old Don.

I.

IT can do no harm to assert in the presence of a sceptical race of undergraduates that the Rev. Stanley Betel was once young. He was young; it may almost be said that he was in love. Were I not afraid of encouraging the young cynics, who since the day of Thackeray are thicker than the frank snobs before him, I would add roundly that he was almost in love with a married woman.

From the time when Stanley, not only young but even an extremely small boy, had got on to the foundation of an ancient public school and into a hat and gown two sizes too large for him, he had never doubted that it was his duty to relieve the paternal purse by gaining what money he could. He had not had much time for doubts, for he had screwed up his short-sighted eyes over Greek letters and shut his long thin nose into dictionaries, until after acquiring many shelves of handsome books with Latin inscriptions to his honour, he had begun to gain money also. Finally, when a college fellowship had made him wholly independent of parental aid, the habit of thought remained; and he would have felt wicked if he had refused a chance of earning money. Thus it happened that long ago, when even Stanley Betel was young, he betook himself to Kirby in the Long Vacation to coach young Orme for his matriculation.

Do what he would, the young fellow could not make his pupil do much work. Young Orme had a hearty love of outdoor life and a cheerful belief in his good luck. He was fond of assuring his anxious instructor that he should scrape through somehow; and the instructor was so little older and of a bodily presence (if Mr. Betel may be said to have had a bodily presence) so much less imposing, that he had but small authority. And so it fell out that the young don, who had worked so hard, yielded bashfully and with many thrills of conscience to the charm and leisure of the place. He told himself anxiously that he must not accustom himself to luxury; but in the drowsy air of Long Vacation, in the great shadows of trees on the wide lawn, in the sloping woods

and open glades of Kirby, there was a luxury to which even the most delicate conscience could scarcely take exception.

There were people staying in the house, a summer party, relations and intimate friends, playing tennis in the cool, exchanging family jokes from garden chairs, dancing after dinner, very much at home. They were rather light people, in whom their host and their host's son found much delight. These were part of the opulent show, at which Stanley Betel blinked with a new pleasure; but their radiance was as nothing in his narrow eyes, when he turned reverently to the lady of the house, the lady of the world, his pupil's mother, Mrs. Orme.

In Mrs. Orme the young tutor beheld a new sort of woman. He had had so little time to look at women. Feminine beauty and grace were linked in his mind only with the pale Hellenic phantoms of his well-worn classical dictionary. It may almost be said that he had never seen a woman except his mother; and the good Mrs. Betel was one whose strange garments suitable for any weather hung in a narrow hall, where also was a prevalent smell of mutton, and who dashed all crooked into her bonnet at the hasty summons of some village sufferer. Now Mrs. Orme appeared before Mrs. Betel's son, tall, large and stately, but very gracious, betraying the goddess as she moved on the smooth-shaven green, and dressed with sumptuous simplicity. Stanley thought reverently of Mrs. Orme's gowns; if he had seen one hanging on a peg, he would not have ventured to sit down in its presence. In that new leisure which his impatient pupil forced upon him, he spent much time in wondering at this gracious dignified lady. Trembling he arrived at the daring conclusion that she was lonely; with a wild throb, half painful and half exquisitely pleasant, he found himself pitying her. He was sure that she was lonely. He could see for all his screwed-up eyes that she was of different clay from her guests. It is true that the young girls told each other that she was perfect, that she was a dear; and they came to her a dozen times a day for unnecessary advice. It is true that men of all ages treated her with a deference unusual in a disrespectful age. Still Mr. Betel knew, and it was with ecstasy that he whispered to himself that he alone knew, that this gracious, splendid woman was lonely. And when this Penelope, translated into English for the young scholar, began to show an interest in his thoughts and his studies, and even to ask his advice about books, he straightway fell down at her silent feet and worshipped. He would have given his poor little angular body to the stake for her.

Mrs. Orme on her side was interested by her boy's tutor. She said to herself placidly that it was a pity that she had lived so little with clever people; she seemed to have known nobody worth talking to. Mrs. Orme was not forty, but she was so near that age that she had begun to think herself an old woman; she had begun to think also now and then that she had not lived. Beautifully brought up, and married, as a girl should be, in her second season, she had been delighted with her handsome and gallant husband, who had a capital seat on horseback and enough money for all the necessities of town and country life. She had a French cook, a French dressmaker, and a French poodle; some people said that she had the neatest ponies in London. As for Kirby it was the ideal country place, neither too near to nor too far from town, and the nicest people always wished to be invited there. Nobody doubted that Mrs. Orme was a very lucky woman. Some of her female friends murmured to each other that it was a pity that she had no girl; but then, when a place like Kirby was in question, how fortunate she was in the possession of three boys, all stout and ruddy as their father. It was when the youngest of these three sturdy lads went to school that Mrs. Orme felt for the first time that her life was monotonous. She had many excellent female friends who felt themselves full of tact. Hardly anybody in her circle did or said the wrong thing. Her husband, on his side, had troops of male friends who beheld Orme's wife with unvarying admiration and respect. She felt that they ranked her as a great British institution with Church and State. And yet, in spite of all the advantages of her position, Mrs. Orme, when she had lived for nearly forty years, sometimes wondered if she had lived at all. Her husband had never given her a moment's uneasiness. As she had never in all those years admitted to herself that her husband was stupid, so at this time of her life she would have been deeply shocked by the suggestion that she sometimes regretted that she had not been a little, a very little, fast. She had always turned coldly from those of her acquaintance about whom other women whispered eagerly over teacups; but it is certain that at this time these women of many experiences were more often in her thoughts. She was a little tired of her houseful of gay harmless young people; and a little more conscious than usual that her husband found them not a day too young. It seemed hardly satisfactory that a man should have no pursuits more serious than lawn-tennis and hunting, and his wife no more important duty than

to see his new horse or admire his volleying. And so, when she turned her eyes from the inevitable white marks on the green, she found that they rested with a faint interest on her boy's tutor. She wondered if this sort of serious and industrious young men made anything better of life. It was not long before she became aware that her interest was returned a hundredfold. The slight and learned youth narrowed his eyes that he might see her better, and dropped them quickly when she looked at him. His thin cheek blushed when she spoke to him, and he stammered in his answers. She smiled at her interest in this new variety of his sex, but the interest was strong enough to raise her now and then from that consciousness of the monotony of life which was now too often with her. She liked to keep him near her in the cool morning-room or on the wide lawn. She asked him about books and learned men; and she pleased herself with the suspicion of his fluttering feelings, of his unfathomed devotion.

When it was time for Stanley Betel to leave his Capua, and the cart was at the door, his hostess stood on the broad stone step with a very real feeling of regret. The young tutor blinked in her calm splendid presence, he pressed her fingers harder than he knew with his nervous hand. 'Well,' he said, stammering, 'I don't know how to say—I never can thank—I shall never, in fact, forget, I—I have been so happy.' He tripped on the step of the dog-cart, and with a scraped shin and a bruised heart was driven rapidly away from the fair beguiling regions of romance.

II.

For the next thirty years nothing happened to Mr. Stanley Betel. He took orders as his parents had always intended; and for the rest he delivered lectures a great many times to succeeding gangs of half heedful, half contemptuous undergraduates. When he was not lecturing, he was preparing new lectures or putting new stuff into the old. He never doubted that it was his duty to fill his hour's discourse as full as it would hold; he never doubted that he owed a great debt to the college which had chosen him as its fellow and rewarded him for his loyalty by keeping his long sensitive nose constantly on the grindstone.

The Rev. Stanley Betel had no time for love, and very little for study. In his youth he had sometimes, in his boldest moments, dared to dream that he might contribute his mite to the

prodigious discoveries of scholars. Perhaps in a vision he had seen the name 'Betelius' in smallest print at the foot of a fair page of Greek, his name thus made immortal by the notice of a German commentator. But slowly this timid hope faded, as year after year he taught the same lesson in almost the same words to successive squads of candidates for honours in the schools. Nevertheless in the rare intervals of leisure he applied himself diligently to the study of ancient text and crabbed commentary. He felt that this was the least which he could do in return for the many advantages of his life. He saw that it was right to labour with might and main, if by any means he could bring some credit to the college which had endowed him with a high and enviable position. So when he was not lecturing nor preparing lectures, he was comparing passages of ancient authors, commentaries on the passages, and commentaries on the commentaries. He led a very studious life for thirty years; and nothing happened to him in that time.

Of course Stanley Betel grew older. Each year he became thinner and more jerky. His short-sighted eyes acquired from much narrowing and peering at inattentive youth a great store of fine lines and creases at the corners. The slight hesitation in his speech, the modest and not ungraceful pauses of the young student, were filled by the veteran tutor, that he might avoid strange silences in his lectures, with a little repeated monosyllable which added nothing to the sense of his words. Such other little habits as that of darting his inquisitive nose and skinny finger at the person from whom he was asking information, became more and more emphatic. His walk became more hurried and less direct. He seemed to drift sideways, or to be blown along with his wide clerical skirts floating or flapping behind him. He was an old don.

The Reverend Stanley Betel was an old don, when slanting his nose along the paper which showed the names of candidates for the college scholarships, he espied the word 'Orme.' He was in a flutter; he felt a keen unusual interest. It was Mr. Betel's duty that morning to distribute to those ambitious boys the first paper of their examination. In careful fulfilment of this task he was dispensing to each youth a printed page, when he caught sight of a face which made him gasp and blink. He knew that he was looking at Orme: and his mind ran back over all those years and assured itself in a moment that this was Mrs. Orme's grandson. He gave the boy half a dozen papers, for his fingers were trembling. There was an odd thrill under his narrow clerical waistcoat. The boy

looked up smiling as he returned the superfluous papers; and Mr. Betel, drifting along by the chair-backs, could not entirely disentangle this young delicate face from that of the handsome matron who had been kind to him at Kirby thirty summers ago. The boy's face was the handsomer and the more delicate. Indeed it is a beautiful face, delicate and resolute, and classic in its fine regularity. Mr. Betel said to himself, as the hours of examination went by, that it was the face of a fine scholar; but remembering his former pupil, whom with amazement he concluded to be the candidate's father, he did not dare to hope. But he soon found that here was a scholar indeed, one born with exquisite discrimination. 'Even his—well—mistakes,' said Mr. Betel on the last day of the examination to a fellow don, 'are—well—beautiful.' He blushed at the extravagance of his own praise, but he felt better for having dared to say it. He made himself so bold that he dared to stop young Orme in the quadrangle, and to ask him with a little shower of 'wells' about Kirby, and about his—in fact—father. About his grandmother he did not dare to ask; but still he was elated by his own prowess. It is perhaps lucky that the college allowed the Rev. Stanley Betel very little voice in the selection of its scholars. He would have tortured himself with efforts to be strictly impartial. When it was announced that his particular candidate had got one of the scholarships, he was radiant as with a personal victory. Alone, at night, he said to himself with a faint blush on his hollow cheek that he almost felt as if it was almost a—well—son of his own.

The friendship between the old don and the young scholar grew apace. In the former it soon became the strongest feeling of which he was capable. Never had the reverend gentleman been torn by passion. His blush had been faint as he read of enchanting women in his well-worn classical dictionary. He had never thought of marriage for himself. Indeed he cherished a mild preference for clerical celibacy, a preference so mild that it did not prevent him from smiling, though a little protesting, at the fine old common-room jests which flowed again when one of his mates slipped downward to matrimony and a country rectory. For himself he had had no thought of love, nor time for loving. And so there grew up in his heart, now grown old, like a faint flower delayed by untimely frosts, a pale love, which might have grown strong in earlier days about a wife and children. He wondered what he had done that his laborious days should be made beautiful with youth and charm; that fortune should have brought to his

staircase the grandson of the one woman who had moved his boyish dreams. At first he invited his young friend with the diffidence of a bashful lover; but, since the guest was not at all shy and soon acquired the habit of dropping in at all hours, the diffidence of the host wore off and only the joy remained. It was a very tender affection which had taken root in the old don's breast. He seemed half bashful suitor, half proud fond parent. Why seek to analyse further this delicate pale feeling which had blossomed late in a somewhat dry life? It is enough to say that the tutor regarded his pupil with extraordinary tenderness.

Basil Orme accepted the affection of this don, who had known 'his people,' with much pleasure. He was very fond of being liked, and accustomed to it. Physically, mentally, morally, he had always been liked and admired. He had a delicate wit (though he had small perception of humour), delicate manners, and a delicate and most delightful scholarship. He had won many prizes and won them easily. He expected nice things to come easily; and the affection of this neat fluttering elderly gentleman promised nice things. He was fastidious, and, when he was tired of the shouts and clumsy fun of other undergraduates, he liked the quiet and order of Mr. Betel's quasi-Gothic apartments. It was not long before he had pushed about the stiff furniture, and given to the severe study a more friendly air. He had exquisite taste. He was ambitious too, and he soon found that over a cup of tea, which was his elderly friend's chief luxury, he could learn a great deal in the easiest and pleasantest manner. He picked Mr. Betel's brains, and Mr. Betel liked it. He found that his bright presence and ready smile paid a high price for all; and he liked to smile and to know that his presence was bright. And so the friendship grew with each year of the boy's undergraduate life; and it seemed that a very beautiful thing had come to the Rev. Stanley Betel in his declining years. About him there was a fair reflection from a half-remembered past, which his timid imagination had veiled with a soft mist of sentiment. Often, as he sat in his stiff-backed chair, there breathed around him the summer air of Kirby Place. There were soft pathetic echoes, a tender evening reflection of the romance of long ago.

III.

It seemed as if capricious fortune would shower gifts upon Mr. Betel's head, which was too narrow and too highly pointed for the bearing of many gifts. He was so grateful for the charm of

youth and friendship which had come to grace his sliding years, that one might have thought that his stock of gratitude was exhausted. But if his head was high and narrow, his thankfulness was wide and deep; and, when one day it seemed as if glory was to be his as well as love, he almost fell on his knees beside his patent knee-hole writing-table. It was the force of a word which struck him, and it was a very little word; but it almost brought him to his knees. It was a very little word; and moreover the different force, which had suddenly struck the old scholar as possible, was so very little different from the force which the word usually conveyed, that to the ordinary right-minded mutton-fed Englishman there would have seemed no difference at all. To the Rev. Stanley Betel it was different as light from darkness. There was a sudden and a blinding illumination. If this little word could have this slightly different influence, the dark sentence, at which his old eyes were peering for the thousandth time, was clear as day. He sat back in his chair, grasping its arms tightly with his long thin fingers. He shut his eyes, while his breath came with a little sob. Then before his closed eyes sentence after sentence, each a puzzle to the learned, arose in order; and each seemed clear by this new light to the learned Betel. Could the provoking little word have this precise force? It seemed certain; it seemed impossible. The little admirable tall brain was in a blaze. It seemed impossible. Either this theory about the word was false, or it was old. It could not be that it had not occurred to some one of those literary Moltkes who sit down patiently and besiege for a life-time the careless sentence of an ancient writer. And so Mr. Betel's leisure was given to perusing Teutonic Latin. He breakfasted with a German; he lunched with a German; he lay down and rose up with their laborious investigations; he brushed the long wisp of hair, which he placed across his skull, above their crabbed pages. Whenever he was not lecturing, he was prying into the notes of the learned. It was tremendous. Not a sign did he see that his theory had occurred to any one of them. And yet it was not to be dismissed as absurd. The more he compared passages, the more certain he felt that he had hit on a great discovery. Not all his modesty could make him doubt for ever. There were irrepressible moments of confidence, moments in which he saw his name inscribed in at least one sentence in the unending history of scholarship. He feared lest he should be dazzled by the too splendid prospect. He prayed against pride. At last after a thousand fluttering hopes and fears he made up his

mind to confide in the being whom he loved best. He could no longer bear the weight of his secret without the sympathy of a friend.

Basil Orme received the old don's confidence with his most charming manner. He was delighted with the theory; he was sure that it was at least a most ingenious suggestion. He did not venture to express an opinion about its novelty. 'How should I know,' he said with his frank engaging smile, 'if some old German has not thought of it at some time or other?—But I feel sure that not one of them has,' he added in a moment, as the old face fell; and he passed his arm round Mr. Betel's shoulders (if shoulders they may be called), and patted him, where the deltoid muscle appears in some other persons. 'I cannot—well—be—in fact—sure—well,' said Mr. Betel; 'but I cannot find a single—well—trace.' He opened and shut his mouth like a nervous fish, and his young comrade patted him again. And then, as he felt Basil's hand upon him, the conscience of the old don awoke with a terrible start. He remembered that, absorbed by the force of his little word, he had almost forgotten that this was his friend's last term of undergraduate life. How abominable it seemed to be so concentrated in one's own efforts that one should forget the coming struggle of one's friend! Young Orme was in for 'Greats,' and Mr. Betel had been most deeply interested in his success. Now it seemed impossible that he had thought of it so little in the last few weeks. His conscience was positively hammering him as he began to pour forth broken questions about his young friend's progress. His young friend however was cool and confident; and he assured Mr. Betel for the twentieth time that, whether he continued to enliven the old grey stones of Oxford, or to transfer his illuminating powers to the bar and to the Senate, he should always take care to see a great deal of him. The old tutor felt with shame that his pupil was more generous to him than he deserved. He begged him to come to him at any time, however unseasonable, if there were any question of any kind to which he needed an answer. Then with his conscience quieted in some degree, he went back to his engrossing theory.

For the few weeks of the term which yet remained to him, he worked at all hours. With nervous tremors and hesitations he began the all-important task of preparing the first rough draft of the pamphlet which he only half dared to foresee in the dim future. Very careful, very symmetrical, and very polished was that pamphlet of his dreams. Meanwhile he worked

so hard at the first of the many rough drafts which were to be, that it was likely that no later version could surpass it in accuracy and neatness of form. Into it he packed with nicest care the result of all his investigations and comparisons of texts and of commentaries. Every moment which he could spare from his faithful labours as tutor and lecturer, he gave to this fine piece of mosaic work, which he regarded as the roughest of a series of rough drafts.

On one of the last afternoons of term, when Mr. Betel was bending over his anxious work, he was startled by a loud rapping at his outer door. He started up with his conscience in a terrible state; he had forgotten for at least half an hour that it was the day on which Basil Orme was to be examined *vivâ voce*. The last of the paper work had been finished some days ago; and in the morning which had just passed, certain candidates with names late in the alphabet had confronted the examiners in person. Among them was Basil Orme. And so the banging at his 'oak' made the old don jump with a sense of guilt, for he knew that his friend had come to tell him how he had fared in the ordeal.

'I ought to tell you,' he began hurriedly as he opened the door, 'that I had—well—forgotten for a moment—in fact, forgotten——'

'Never mind, never mind,' cried the lad; he was flushed and spoke quickly; he walked about the room. 'Our theory has had an immense success,' he said quickly. 'I have been complimented by the examiners. I don't think I told you that in one of the papers we had to translate the bit which is the very strongest in support of our theory; of course I did it in our way, and I put a short note at the end. I never dreamt it would make such an excitement. It has had a tremendous success.'

'They complimented *you*?' said the old don, faintly.

'Oh yes; I'm all right. They as good as told me that nobody had done better. I can't stop; I am going to town to tell my people, but I couldn't go without saying good-bye to you. I haven't a minute. Good-bye.' He wrung his friend's hand; he half embraced him; he said some more tender things very quickly; he was in a very great hurry.

The old don went back to his chair, and there he sat staring at the rough draft. He sat quite still till the next person came to his door; and when he heard him, he began with nervous haste to tear up his MS. He thrust the bits into the waste-paper basket, as his 'scout' came in with a note. The note was from one of the examiners, who could not rest till he had congratu-

lated the Rev. Stanley Betel on his brilliant pupil. Of course he could write nothing yet about the result of the examination; but he was looking forward to telling Mr. Betel of a most beautiful piece of translation done by one of the candidates in whom he was interested. Right or wrong, the new force given to a word in this passage, which had been a puzzle to scholars, was original and of surpassing interest to scholars all over the world. Appearing as a suggestion from a mere boy, it was amazing, phenomenal.

'I won't dine,' said Mr. Betel to the scout, who was still moving about the room.

'Shall I bring some tea, sir?' asked the scout.

'Yes, yes, if you please—in fact, yes—tea.'

The old don drank his cup of tea by the light of his shaded reading-lamp. He treated himself to half a cup more; he thought it might steady him, for the cup and saucer rattled in his small thin hands. He opened one of his favourite books, but it looked strange to his dim eyes; he could not read; books seemed stale and unprofitable, and this new feeling frightened him. He sat with the volume open on his knees and began to tell himself that he had a great deal to be thankful for. What good things beyond his poor deserts had come to him in life? He could well afford to forego something. And so he began to think less timidly of the brilliant boy whose boyish days were over; and he thought how much he, a dull elderly man, owed to that bright affectionate being. At last, with his old head bowed on the hard corner of his patent writing-table, he prayed silently that all the good things of life might come to Basil Orme.

JULIAN STURGIS.

A Garden-Party at Rotherhithe.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'CHARLES LOWDER.'

WE took Tower Hill on our way, and arrived at the Tower Station where we were met by Sister A——, long before the hour for the garden-party, as we were anxious first to see the work which has received large and generous support from many readers of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE, who had been interested by an account of our visit two years ago to the dock labourers; and still more of the food provided for those out of work, on the hiring-grounds in the neighbourhood. This work has been doubled; the 'Don,' as the food-truck daily sent to the unhired labourers is called, has now a mate, the 'Donna,' provided and maintained by contributions sent through the Editor of LONGMAN'S. It is a remarkable instance of a really great work for the relief of thousands, growing out of the kind thought of one man, the captain of a sailing vessel, who made a collection amongst his crew for the purchase of the 'Don.'

Ladies first, however. We walked from the station to the nearest entrance to the private grounds of the Tower, and just outside the gate we found the pretty 'Donna,' in her coat of bright blue, on which her name was conspicuously painted. She had carried her daily store of good things to her usual post, but was now empty, as they had been transferred to the little booth which has been put up for the serving Sister, and where she was dispensing them to the miserably poor and ragged purchasers. Inside the booth is a cupboard containing the store of bowls, cans, and spoons, which are lent to the men, and which are invariably honestly brought back.

It is scarcely necessary to say, in the pages of this MAGAZINE, that while the warm cooked food brought to the docks can be there sold to the labourers without loss, this is impossible in the case of the dinners supplied by the 'Don' and 'Donna' to those *out of work*, for whom halfpenny and farthing portions are made up. So that without the subscriptions sent by the readers of

LONGMAN's the 'Donna' could not have fulfilled her daily mission through the whole of last winter and spring.

There was much deliberation last November as to the best ground for pitching the new food-tent, so as to render it of the greatest possible service to the hungry crowds outside. In this difficulty the police officials came to the Sisters' assistance, and pronounced, without hesitation, that the proper spot for the 'Donna' was at this side the Tower, at the mouth of the sub-way across the Thames, and close to the wharf where the small foreign trading craft are unladed. Hither come the orange and lemon boats, and ships laden with Dutch cheeses, condensed milk, and other foreign produce.

There are always a terrible number of hungry, out-of-work men hurrying about in hopes of a job at landing the cargo, but, like all other dock work, its worst feature is its extreme uncertainty. Little care the men, with their own empty stomachs and vision of starving babes at home, that the labour is hard, wet, dirty, and ill-paid: too often the sickness of disappointment alone is theirs, and after a very weary look-out of nine or ten hours, they slouch off with aching limbs and strained eyes. God help them! One poor creature, hearing a report that a large number of 'hands' were about to be taken on, insisted on leaving his bed at a hospital, though suffering severely from a carbuncle, answering the doctor's remonstrances with the words, 'Oh, sir, this is a hiring day, I can't lose my chance of a job!'

'You're safe to have lots of customers at this 'ere "Donna" truck,' observed a very poor old man, whose chance of 'a job' seemed very small. 'You can't fail to, for everything's so very good and cheap. Why, my poor old wife's been ill a-bed for months, and I bought a penn'orth of pudding, and I had half and she had half. And, oh my! don't she just talk o' that bit of pudding! Poor soul! she's only skin and bone, and ain't had nought but a bit o' bread for ever so long. I am over sixty, ye see, and the foreman don't care to take on an old man like me.'

Indeed, the 'Donna' had scarcely taken up her position last November before a cluster of delighted men gathered round her, who would hardly have been known for the same dejected-looking beings that had been standing a few minutes before gazing disconsolately at the Thames mud-grubbers.

'So the cheap food's come to our part,' they said. 'The soup's warmed my inside a' ready,' observed a very thin hungry-looking man. 'I wish I'd had it the first thing this morning

instead of nothink.' Another stood eyeing the smoking cans wistfully, and said: 'Just wait till I've earned a penny or two, and then I'll be sure to patronise the new truck.' Even while the customers were swallowing the hot food, they kept an eye fixed on the wharves and warehouses, and were always ready for action at the smallest signal of being wanted. So that certainly the kind maintainers of the 'Donna' need not feel that they are helping those unwilling to help themselves. 'It would be a good job if you could pay us a visit of a evening, when we're tired out with waiting for boats to come in as never comes,' was one suggestion made by the customers; adding, 'Ah! you've come to the right place, and not before you was wanted.'

Indeed, as the news of the advent of the 'Donna' got wind, so did the hungry crowd increase, till the takings were from fourteen to eighteen shillings a day. One day a number of poor Dutch and German emigrants landed at Tower Hill, just at the dinner hour; they were met by our men with the very natural inquiry why they had come to England. 'If you've come for work,' they said, 'you'd much better have stopped where you come from; just look at the men waiting at yonder gate. There's more cats there than'll catch mice, we reckon.'

However, the dockmen generously put up the unwelcome visitors to buying food at the 'Donna.' They must have been very poor, for one man was noticed who, after paying for a half-penny basin of soup, carried it to a quiet corner, called his wife and family round him, and fed them with spoonfuls in turn. The family talked loud and fast about the soup, smacking their lips over it with evident satisfaction, the English customers laughing heartily at the scene.

'We can live uncommon well now down here, thanks to this,' said one man, striking the truck, 'and a many of us ought to thank God for that.'

Our poor unemployed! There is much hidden goodness in them under a rough exterior. Seldom are the ears of those who wait upon them pained by an impious expression. They bear their sorrows and sufferings with marvellous patience and fortitude, and seem to consider it only 'in the course of nature' that they should be cold, naked, and hungry, while other men wear fine linen and fare sumptuously.

The following conversation was overheard between two old men standing by the 'Don':—

'Well, mate, I'm going to try my luck at No. 10 gate. I did

get an hour at this side just now, and—worse luck to me—I lost the 1s. 6d. I earned at “tossing.”

The speaker followed up this remark with a form of imprecation common among this class of men—‘God blind me!’

‘Shut up, mate,’ said the other, ‘you didn’t ought to call on God like that, and particularly as you’ve only got one eye now.’

‘Aye what, Martin! I didn’t know before you was a religious man.’

‘Well, you’re right there, but I believe there’s a God somewhere, and I’ve heard say as He answers prayer, and what if He did as you asked Him just now?’

‘Well, to be sure! it would be ockard if, as you say, He does what folks axes Him. Well, anyhow, I’ll never ax Him to blind me again, and I’ll tell you more, Martin, I’ll turn over a new leaf and never play pitch-and-toss no more.’

One morning a wretched pale-faced lad stood watching the steaming food on the truck for some time, then he seemed to gather up his courage and addressed the Sister. ‘Please could you give me a bit of anything to eat, I haven’t tasted for two days, and I’m nigh on starving. I’m not of these parts. I come up three days since from Brighton looking for work, but I haven’t yet been “called on.” I’m just broken-hearted. If I’d seen those men at that there gate before I started I’d never have come. There’s no chance for such as me in that crowd.’

It was a case in which the Sister felt she could not refuse the entreaty of a lady to be allowed to pay for a dinner for him. Alas! it has become a painful duty to discourage the apparently harmless exercise of hospitality among visitors who come to see ‘how the “Donna” gets on,’ and who, struck to the heart by the sight of the crowd of ragged needy creatures round the stall, wish to put their hands into their pockets at once and secure a good dinner to everyone. But the consequence of this kindness has been that the same men, and those not the most to be pitied, have waited round the truck hour by hour to waylay visitors and wring money from them by piteous tales of hunger and want, while the really needy often fall into the background and miss the aid.

‘Do you know anything of this poor fellow? Is he indeed starving?’ asked one gentleman of the Sister in charge of the truck.

‘He has just bought and eaten his dinner of soup and pudding,’ was her reply, followed by a storm of abuse from the men, who ‘didn’t see what right she had to stop his getting a

trifle out of the gentleman.' The Sisters have learned to be wise as serpents, and have made the rule for 'Don' and 'Donna' that all men in full work shall pay full price for food.

'Why, Sister, I got this here basin of soup for a ha'-penny yesterday, and to-day it's a penny!'

'You are in full work, are you not?'

'Well, yes, and that's true.'

'You hear our rule, then.'

'Well, I don't complain. It's fair, I own; we oughter pay more than the poor chaps as can't get a job.'

Not long ago the queerest customer the Sisters had ever entertained appeared. An ostrich was conducted up to the 'Don' by its master, and two rolls were purchased for its dinner. Full price, of course; LONGMAN'S contributions were not to be taxed in this case. One poor man bought two ha'porths of pudding. 'Look ye, Sister,' cried a bystander, 'look at the poor chap what he's a-doing with it.' And sure enough he was anxiously dividing it between his wife and three children. 'That'll be the only hot thing they'll taste to-day,' was the comment of the sympathetic comrade.

It is not on Tower Hill only that the good Sisters bring wholesome food within reach of the poor; during the past winter no less than 10,535 half-penny dinners were distributed by them to children in Shoreditch, besides which, soup and pudding were sold in large quantities twice a week, and thus many a home was provided with a family dinner which otherwise would have been bare of food.

We have lingered almost too long by the 'Donna' truck, and must move on; the Sisters have a pass through the Tower grounds; we were challenged occasionally by policemen and beefeaters, but a nod from our conductress and the words 'going to the "Don"' brought a smile and a permission to pass, as they touched helmets and caps to the Sister. At the other gate of the Tower grounds we found our old friend the 'Don' hard at work as ever, though looking rather battered and worn in comparison with his smart young helpmeet. It was a hot May-day, but the air was cool and fresh in the covered way running round St. Katharine's Docks, and this is a great boon to the Sisters who live at the Workmen's Restaurant in Dock Street, from which the trucks are sent, as they are allowed to bring their orphans for exercise and air to St. Katharine's. To the restaurant we now repaired for luncheon, and found as usual a large business going on with working men

customers. It is fitted with attractive brightness, and is thronged all through the day by sailors of all nations, and labouring men from the neighbourhood, who enjoy the good food and comfort of the coffee-room, free from evils which would beset them elsewhere; while, from the great underground kitchen, vast quantities of hot food are daily carried to supply the five food trucks—three on the Docks, the 'Don,' and the 'Donna.'

There is a long street running parallel to Ratcliff Highway, and of not less evil repute, leading straight to Shadwell Station. Perhaps what struck us most in passing through it was the squalor of the shops, and the condition of the eatables exposed for sale. Everything looked stale, fly-marked, blown upon in some way; faded vegetables, unwholesome looking meat, mouldy cheese, ancient butter—all reminded us of John Girder's famous direction after feasting the Master of Ravenswood: 'Let the house be redd up, the broken meat set by, and if there is onything totally uneatable, let it be gien to the puir folk.'

But at Shadwell also the Sisters have come to the rescue, a small mission-room having been placed at their disposal, accommodating about sixty children. The first day it was opened it was filled at once, but the Sisters were scarcely prepared, when the little diners had taken their fill and departed, to find another sixty clamouring to be let in. Nor was this all. Another, and yet another reinforcement appeared, till the room had been filled and cleared six times over. Thus for many weeks about three hundred hungry little ones were feasted, in five or six detachments. Happily, arrangements are in progress for increasing the accommodation, and it is hoped these may be complete before the cold weather sets in; for dining under such difficulties is a somewhat severe tax both upon the servers and the children.

We took the Underground Railway at Shadwell, and, passing through the Thames Tunnel, found ourselves in five minutes at Rotherhithe Station. As we walked from thence to the Mission House established by the Sisters, we perceived a marked difference for the better in the whole appearance of the streets and the people in this region as compared with the other side of the river. Those who knew Rotherhithe, or 'the Sailors' Haven,' as its more ancient name implies, in earlier times, tell us that it was formed by one straggling High Street on the edge of the docks, and its now countless streets and alleys had no existence. The inhabitants, however, have scarcely changed in character, and are remarkable for their gentle manners, honesty in the midst of

poverty, and readiness to be instructed. They are extremely responsive to kindness—anxious to help themselves if others will show them how.

And now at last we have arrived at our journey's end—two small houses taken by the Sisters, which are centres of comfort and help in the neighbourhood, and we find all in busy preparation for the 'garden-party.' The guests are hard-worked and weary mothers, but they quite overflowed the two small rooms on the ground floor—sitting on the staircase, on steps to the garden, glad to catch what words they could—all doors open to accommodate the crowds of poor women, so that a 'mothers' meeting' became a garden-party. There are more than a hundred on the roll, very poor indeed; their sufferings during the winter months are often terrible. One woman was boasting that she would thrive on very little food, on which another asked, 'What, don't yer never feel faint nor giddy?' as if she were really anxious to learn the secret of overcoming the pangs of hunger. During hard winter times, when a Sister was expressing grief that she had not more nourishment to give to the sick, she was answered by the exclamation: 'Oh! it ain't what ye give away, Sister, it's your sympathy that we cares for.' Poor things! they have need of it. 'I used to fret over my babies when they died,' said one, 'but now when I looks at our empty table, I thanks God that He took them early.'

To-day, at least, they had both sympathy and food: while waiting for the excellent tea and bread-and-butter with which we also were refreshed, we passed through the next little slip of back garden, and into the adjoining house, which has been turned into a Cottage Hospital for men. The six beds are almost entirely filled by accident cases, mostly urgent, from the docks. The injured men were formerly jolted, in great suffering, to the nearest large hospital, a distance of some miles. One poor fellow, who lately broke a blood-vessel in the leg whilst at work, bravely dragged himself to the Cottage Hospital, and then fainted away; he could have lived but a few minutes longer had not help been at hand.

'That's the place to go to if yer be hurt,' said one man, as he passed the house, 'they handle yer so nicely.' Nice handling and kind words are indeed needed; one patient with three ribs broken and deep wounds on his face was helped by his mates from the docks to the hospital; the sufferings of that dreadful walk he could scarcely bear to relate. Many men come in with injured hands; it is often necessary to amputate one or two fingers. What

does this mean for the sufferers but to return home no longer bread-winners? It is almost useless for them to seek employment in their weak state; the strong men are chosen and they go to the wall.

In one bed we found a fair pretty boy of about twelve, with large blue eyes; he had fallen in the dock, and broken his leg in two places. The Sisters told us that when brought in he cried piteously for many hours, and on being asked why he was so unhappy, exclaimed: 'Oh! it's because father and my big brothers are out of work. Mother and I are the only ones that are earning anything, and now when Saturday comes there won't be no money to buy food for the babies. Oh! please, you *must* let me get up and go to work;' and then his sobs broke out afresh.

Another little fellow was brought in with an injury to the spine from a brick having been thrown at him; his legs are paralysed, and it is apparently an incurable case. Little can now be done to relieve him in the poor home to which he has returned; both parents work hard for their living, and little James has to trust chiefly to his sister of ten years old for all he wants. It would, indeed, be a mercy to befriend this poor child, and place him in a hospital for children—his life is now spent in a small close room, and his sufferings are greatly increased by want of proper nursing. Is it too much to hope that it may be in the power and in the heart of some reader of this article to procure his admission to some crippled children's Home, where his pains may be at least alleviated?

The hospital is but small; containing, however, three rooms for patients, a day-room for convalescents, a doctor's room, good bathroom, and sleeping rooms for the Sisters. On the basement floor two rooms have been fitted up as a dispensary, where medicines are supplied to the poor at as low a price as possible, though not so low but that in time the dispensary may become self-supporting. Plenty of sick babies are brought to the dispensary, to which a kind friend and surgeon gives his time as a free gift: the mothers can't spare time to take them to the hospital. 'Why sometimes I goes at ten,' one poor woman says, 'and most times I don't get back till nigh upon five o'clock. It's wait, wait, wait! first to see the doctor and then to get the medicine, so there's a whole day's work lost, and nothing coming in.'

Flowers for the sick are amongst the gifts most valued by the Sisters at Rotherhithe; if the senders could but follow them into poor homes, and see the bright smile which lights up the

faces of invalids, they would be more than recompensed for their kindness.

Returning from the Cottage Hospital, which, in spite of its suffering inmates, is full of cheerful brightness and comfort, we found the 'garden-party' next door in full swing, and gladly took part in the refreshments, which were served under two small lime-trees. We were only sorry that the invitations had not included the children, who on Sundays throng this same Mission House. They are bright and quick, and have a good ear for music. Many of them have been gathered out of absolute heathenism and ignorance. 'He swore, Sister, since he was christened!' exclaimed one little fellow, pointing to a culprit, who hung his head, looking deeply ashamed of his relapse into old habits. On Easter Day a procession of 340 children was formed, each child carrying a bunch of flowers. A ragged class for children whose lives are spent in the alleys and streets is an off-shoot of the Sunday School; the children come regularly twice a week during the winter months. There are also classes for more educated boys three times a week; many of these lads have good voices, and their great treat is to be allowed to sing for the patients next door; it is amusing to see their look of pride and satisfaction when a new boy joins the class.

The wonder is, how the Sisters can find time for all their labours for the people of Rotherhithe. In one of the principal streets stand two large grey houses—the stays' factory, through the windows of which comes the hum of many sewing machines. The Sisters began their work amongst the girls by reading to them during their dinner hour, then they were invited to tea at the Mission House, and now, after a year's work, they fill the rooms twice a week, craving for instruction; many of them have asked to be prepared for baptism. An urgent request was sent a few days ago to the Mission House that a Sister would come as soon as possible to one of the girls who was dying, having taken cold in the bitter east wind. When she heard footsteps on the stairs she exclaimed, 'That's one of them, I'm sure,' and roused herself to listen to the last words of comfort. 'Mother, mother, send for one of the Sisters,' had been her cry for hours, and now that her wish had been gratified she quietly passed away.

There is one institution at Rotherhithe which might be copied with advantage in other parts of London—a public wash-house. Here, winter and summer, a little before eight o'clock, a group of women are sure to be waiting for the doors to open.

They pass through beautifully clean passages to a long room, and take their places at a row of tubs provided with taps of hot and cold water. From these they pass to the rinsing machine, which is used by the women in turn, according to their number, and then to the mangles or ironing-room. Finally, the clothes find their way to the airing-room, which is kept at a certain temperature by a furnace; a stoker and engine-man being always on the premises. The whole washing for a family can be done in three or four hours at a nominal cost, and anyone living amongst the poor will feel the immense boon conferred on them by this admirably managed establishment.

‘What can we do?’ has often been the cry of late from those who have awakened to feel that they are the keepers of the wilderness of neglected brethren not far from their gates. Eight hundred pounds have been sent to the Sisters from some such sympathisers, and have been placed in the bank as a nucleus of a fund for establishing houses at Rotherhithe and Bromley, where a little band of devoted workers may live—not merely to alleviate the immediate wants of the surrounding poor, but to teach them how to raise themselves out of the slough of poverty, and vice, and misery in which too many of them live.

They must be daily patiently taught a better way of living, and to do this efficiently it is necessary to live among them. This is a time when there is much talk as to the best way of helping the poor, and some may think that better methods of improving their condition may be devised than those employed by our Sisters. It should at least be remembered that while others discuss measures, or even visit our slums, they have cast themselves into the breach, and are quietly and silently working with the ever-increasing experience gained by life in East London. It is also worth while to bear in mind a saying of Sydney Smith’s: ‘To do anything in this world worth doing, we must not stand back shivering and shrinking, but jump in, and scramble through as well as we can.’

Madam.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER L.

THE Hôtel Venat that night closed its doors upon many anxious and troubled souls. A certain agitation seemed to have crept through the house itself. The landlady was disturbed in her bureau, moving about restlessly, giving short answers to the many inquirers who came to know what was the matter. 'What is there, do you ask?' she said, stretching out her plump hands, 'there is nothing! there is that Mademoiselle, the young Anglaise, has an *attaque des nerfs*. Nothing could be more simple. The reason I know not. Is it necessary to inquire? An affair of the heart! Les Anglaises have two or three in a year. Mademoiselle has had a disappointment. The uncle has come to interfere, and she has a seizure. I do not blame her; it is the weapon of a young girl. What has she else, *pauvre petite*, to avenge herself?'

'But, Madame, they say that something has been seen—a ghost, a——'

'There are no ghosts in my house,' the indignant landlady said: and her tone was so imperious and her brow so lowering, that the timid questioners scattered in all directions. The English visitors were not quite sure what an *attaque des nerfs* was. It was not a 'nervous attack;' it was something not to be defined by English terms. English ladies do not have hysterics nowadays; they have neuralgia, which answers something of the same purpose, but then neuralgia has no sort of connection with ghosts.

In Mrs. Lennox's sitting-room upstairs, which was so well lighted, so fully occupied, with large windows opening upon the garden, and white curtains fluttering at the open windows, a very agitated group was assembled. Mrs. Lennox was seated at a distance from the table, with her white handkerchief in her hand, with which now and then she wiped off a few tears. Sometimes she would throw a word into the conversation that was going on, but for the most part confined herself to passive remonstrances

and appeals, lifting up now her hands, now her eyes, to heaven. It was half because she was so overcome by her feelings that Mrs. Lennox took so little share in what was going on, and half because her brother had taken the management of this crisis off her hands. She did not think that he showed much mastery of the situation, but she yielded it to him with a great and consolatory consciousness that, whatever should now happen, *she* could not be held as the person to blame.

Rosalind's story was that which the reader already knows, with the addition of another extracted from little Amy, who had one of those wonderful tales of childish endurance and silence, which seem scarcely credible, yet occur so often, to tell. For many nights past Amy, clinging to her sister, with her face hidden on Rosalind's shoulder, declared that she had seen the same figure steal in. She had never clearly seen the face, but the child had been certain from the first that it was mamma. Mamma had gone to Johnny first, and then had come to her own little bed, where she stood for a moment before she disappeared. Johnny's outcry had been always, Amy said, after the figure disappeared, but she had seen it emerge from out of the dimness, and glide away, and by degrees this mystery had become the chief incident in her life. All this Rosalind repeated with tremulous eloquence and excitement, as she stood before the two elder people, on her defence.

'But I saw her, Uncle John; what argument can be so strong as that? You have been moving about, you have not got your letters: and perhaps, perhaps——' cried Rosalind with tears, 'perhaps it has happened only now, only to-night. A woman who was far from her children might come and see them—and see them,' she struggled to say through her sobs, 'on her way to heaven.'

'Oh, Rosalind! it is a fortnight since it began,' Mrs. Lennox said.

'Do people die in a moment?' cried Rosalind. 'She may have been dying all this time; and perhaps when they thought her wandering in her mind it might be that she was here. Oh, my mother; who would watch over her, who would be taking care of her? and me so far away!'

John Trevanion sprang from his chair. It was intolerable to sit there, and listen and feel the contagion of this excitement, which was so irrational, so foolish, gain his own being. Women take a pleasure in their own anguish, which a man cannot bear. 'Rosalind,' he cried, 'this is too terrible, you know. I cannot

stand it if you can; I tell you, if anything had happened, I must have heard. All this is simply impossible. You have all got out of order, the children first, and their fancies have acted upon you.'

'It is their digestion, I always said so—or gout in the system,' said Aunt Sophy, lifting her handkerchief to her eyes.

'It is derangement of the brain, I think,' said John. 'I see I must get you out of here; one of you has infected the other. Come, Rosalind, you have so much sense—let us see you make use of it.'

'Uncle John, what has sense to do with it? I have seen her,' Rosalind said.

'This is madness, Rosalind.'

'What is madness? Are my eyes mad that saw mamma? I was not thinking of seeing her. In a moment I lifted up my eyes, and she was there. Is it madness that she should die? Oh no, more wonderful how she can live; or madness to think that her heart would fly to us—oh, like an arrow, the moment it was free?'

'Rosalind,' said Mrs. Lennox, 'poor Grace was a very religious woman: at that moment she would be thinking about her Maker.'

'Do you think she would be afraid of Him?' cried Rosalind 'afraid that our Lord would be jealous, that He would not like her to love her children? Oh, that's not what my mother thought! My religion is what I got from her. She was not afraid of Him—she loved Him. She would know that He would let her come, perhaps bring her and stand by her: perhaps,' the girl cried, clasping her hands, 'if I had been better, more religious, more like my mother, I should have seen Him in the room too.'

John Trevanion seized her hands almost fiercely. Short of giving up his own self-control, and yielding to this stormy tide of emotion, it was the only thing he could do. 'I must have an end of this,' he said. 'Rosalind, you must be calm—we shall all go distracted if you continue so. She was a good woman, as Sophy says. She never could, I don't believe it, have gratified herself at your expense like this. I shall telegraph the first thing in the morning to the lawyers, to know if they have any news. Will that satisfy you? Suspend your judgment till I hear; if then it turns out that there is any cause——' here his voice broke and yielded to the strain of emotion: upon which Rosalind, whose face had been turned away, rose up suddenly and flung herself upon

him as Amy had done upon her, crying, 'Oh, my mother! oh, my mother! you loved her too, uncle John.'

Thus the passion of excited feeling extended itself. For a moment John Trevanion sobbed too, and the girl felt, with a sensation of awe which calmed her, the swelling of the man's breast. He put her down in her chair next moment with a tremulous smile. 'No more, Rosalind—we must not all lose our senses. I promise you if there is any truth in your imagination you shall not want my sympathy. But I am sure you are exciting yourself unnecessarily; I know I should have heard had there been anything wrong. My dear, no more now.'

Next morning John Trevanion was early astir. He had slept little, and his mind was full of cares. In the light of the morning he felt a little ashamed of the agitation of last night, and of the credulity to which he himself had been drawn by Rosalind's excitement. He said to himself that no doubt it was in the imagination of little Amy that the whole myth had arisen. The child had been sleepless, as children often are, and no doubt she had formed to herself that spectre out of the darkness which sympathy and excitement and solitude had embodied to Rosalind also. Nothing is more contagious than imagination. He had himself been all but overpowered by Rosalind's impassioned certainty. He had felt his own firmness waver; how much more was an emotional girl likely to waver, who did not take into account the tangle of mental workings even in a child? As he came out into the cool morning air it all seemed clear enough and easy; but the consequences were not easy, nor how he was to break the spell, and recall the visionary child and the too sympathetic girl to practical realities, and dissipate these fancies out of their heads. He was not very confident in his own powers; he thought they were quite as likely to overcome him as he to restore them to composure. But still something must be done, and the scene changed at least. As he came along the corridor from his room, with a sense of being the only person waking in this part of the house, though the servants had long been stirring below, his ear was caught by a faint quick sound, and a whispering call from the apartment occupied by his sister. He looked round quickly, fearful, as one is in a time of agitation, of every new sound, and saw another actor in the little drama, one whose name had not yet been so much as mentioned as taking any part in it—the sharp, inquisitive matter-of-fact little Sophy, who was the one of the children he liked least. Sophy made energetic gestures to stop him, and

with elaborate precaution came out of her room attired in a little dressing-gown of blue flannel, with bare feet in slippers, and her hair hanging over her shoulders. He stood still in the passage with great impatience while she elaborately closed the door behind her, and came towards him on her toes, with an evident enjoyment of the mystery. 'Oh, uncle John! hush, don't make any noise,' Sophy said.

'Is that all you want to tell me?' he asked severely.

'No, uncle John: but we must not wake these poor things, they are all asleep. I want to tell you—do you think we are safe here and nobody can hear us? Please go back to your room. If anyone were to come and see me, in bare feet and my dressing-gown——'

He laughed somewhat grimly, indeed with a feeling that he would like to whip this important little person: but Sophy detected no undercurrent of meaning. She cried 'Hush!' again with the most imperative energy under her breath, and swinging by his arm drew him back to his room, which threw a ray of morning sunshine down the passage from its open door. The man was a little abashed by the entrance of this feminine creature, though she was but thirteen, especially as she gave a quick glance round of curiosity and sharp inspection. 'What an awfully big sponge, and what a lot of boots you have!' she said quickly. 'Uncle John! they say one ought never to watch or listen or anything of that sort: but when everybody was in such a state last night, how do you think I could just stay still in bed? I saw that lady come out of the children's room, uncle John.'

The child, though her eyes were dancing with excitement and the delight of meddling, and the importance of what she had to say, began at this point to change colour, to grow red and then pale.

'You! I did not think you were the sort of person, Sophy——'

'Oh, wait a little, uncle John! To see ghosts you were going to say. But that is just the mistake. I knew all the time it was a real lady. I don't know how I knew. I just found out, out of my own head.'

'A real lady! I don't know, Sophy, what you mean.'

'Oh, but you do, it is quite simple. It is no ghost, it is a real lady, as real as anyone. I stood at the door and saw her come out. She went quite close past me, and I felt her things, and they were as real as mine. She makes no noise because she is so light and thin. Besides, there are no ghosts,' said Sophy. 'If she

had been a ghost she would have known I was there, and she never did, never found me out though I felt her things. She had a great deal of black lace on,' the girl added, not without meaning, though it was a meaning altogether lost upon John Trevanion. Though she was so cool and practical, her nerves were all in commotion. She could not keep still; her eyes, her feet, her fingers all were quivering. She made a dart aside to his dressing-table. 'What big, big brushes—and no handles to them! Why is everything a gentleman has so big? though you have so little hair. Her shoes were of that soft kind without any heels to them, and she made no noise. Uncle John!'

'This is a very strange addition to the story, Sophy. I am obliged to you for telling me. It was no imagination, then, but somebody who for some strange motive—— I am very glad you had so much sense, not to be deceived.'

'Uncle John!' Sophy said. She did not take any notice of this applause, as in other circumstances she would have done; everything about her twitched and trembled, her eyes seemed to grow large like Amy's. She could not stand still. 'Uncle John!'

'What is it, Sophy? You have something more to say.'

The child's eyes filled with tears. So sharp they were, and keen, that this liquid medium seemed inappropriate to their eager curiosity and brightness. She grew quite pale, her lips quivered a little. 'Uncle John!' she said again, with an hysterical heave of her bosom, 'I think it is mamma.'

'Sophy!' He cried out with such a wildness of exclamation that she started with fright, and those hot tears dropped out of her eyes. Something in her throat choked her. She repeated, in a stifled, broken voice, 'I am sure it is mamma.'

'Sophy! you must have some reason for saying this. What is it? Don't tell me half, but everything. What makes you think——?'

'Oh, I don't think at all,' cried the child. 'Why should I think? I saw her. I would not tell the others or say anything, because it would harm us all, wouldn't it, uncle John? but I know it is mamma.'

He seized her by the shoulder in hot anger and excitement. 'You little——! Could you think of that when you saw your mother—if it is your mother? but that's impossible. And you can't be such a little—such a demon as you make yourself out.'

'You never said that to anyone else,' cried Sophy, bursting into tears; 'it was Rex that told me. He said we should lose all

our money if mamma came back. We can't live without our money, can we, uncle John? Other people may take care of us, and—all that. But if we had no money what would become of us? Rex told me. He said that was why mamma went away.'

John Trevanion gazed at the little girl in her precocious wisdom with a wonder for which he could find no words. Rex, too, that fresh and manly boy, so admirable an example of English youth; to think of these two young creatures talking it over, coming to their decision! He forgot even the strange light, if it was a light, which she had thrown upon the events of the previous evening, in admiration and wonder at this, which was more wonderful. At length he said, with perhaps a tone of satire too fine for Sophy, 'As you are the only person who possesses this information, Sophy, what do you propose to do?'

'Do?' she said, looking at him with startled eyes; 'I am not going to do anything, uncle John. I thought I would tell you——'

'And put the responsibility on my shoulders? Yes, I understand that. But you cannot forget what you have seen. If your mother, as you think, is in the house, what shall you do?'

'Oh, uncle John,' said Sophy, pale with alarm. 'I have not really, really seen her, if that is what you mean. She only just passed where I was standing. No one could punish me just for having seen her pass.'

'I think you are a great philosopher, my dear,' he said.

At this, Sophy looked very keenly at him, and deriving no satisfaction from the expression of his face, again began to cry. 'You are making fun of me, uncle John,' she said. 'You would not laugh like that if it had been Rosalind. You always laugh at us children whatever we may say.'

'I have no wish to laugh, Sophy, I assure you. If your aunt or someone wakes and finds you gone from your bed, how shall you explain it?'

'Oh, I shall tell her that I was—— I know what I shall tell her,' Sophy said, recovering herself; 'I am not such a silly as that.'

'You are not silly at all, my dear. I wish you were not half so clever,' said John. He turned away with a sick heart. Sophy and those unconscious, terrible revelations of hers were more than the man could bear. The air was fresh outside, the day was young: he seemed to have come out of an oppressive atmosphere of age and sophistication, calculating prudence and artificial life, when he left the child behind him. He was so much overwhelmed by Sophy that for the moment he did not fully

realise the importance of what she had told him, and it was not till he had walked some distance, and reconciled himself to nature in the still brightness of the morning, that he awoke with a sudden sensation which thrilled through and through him to the meaning of what the little girl had said. Her mother—was it possible?—no ghost, but a living woman. This was indeed a solution of the problem which he had never thought of. At first, after Madam's sudden departure from Highcourt, John Trevanion went nowhere without a sort of vague expectation of meeting her suddenly, in some quite inappropriate place—on a railway, in a hotel. But now, after years had passed, he had no longer that expectation. The world is so small, as it is the common vulgarity of the moment to say, but nevertheless the world is large enough to permit people who have lost each other in life to drift apart, never to meet, to wander about almost within sight of each other, yet never cross each other's paths. He had not thought of that—he could scarcely give any faith to it now. It seemed too natural, too probable to have happened. And yet it was not either natural or probable that Mrs. Trevanion, such as he had known her, a woman so self-restrained, so long experienced in the act of subduing her own impulses, should risk the health of her children and shatter their nerves by secret visits that looked like those of a supernatural being. It was impossible to him to think this of her. She who had not hesitated to sacrifice herself entirely to their interests once, would she be so forgetful of them now? And yet, a mother hungering for the sight of her children's faces, severed from them, without hope, was she to be judged by ordinary rules? Was there any expedient which she might not be pardoned for taking—any effort which she might not make to see them once more?

The immediate question, however, was what to do? He could not insist upon carrying the party away, which was his first idea; for various visitors were already on their way to join them, and it would be cruel to interrupt the 'Koor' which Mrs. Lennox regarded with so much hope. The anxious guardian did as so many anxious guardians have done before: he took refuge in a compromise. Before he returned to the hotel he had hired one of the many villas in the neighbourhood, the white board with the inscription *à louer*, coming to him like a sudden inspiration. Whether the appearance which had disturbed them was of this world or of another, the change must be beneficial.

The house stood upon a wooded height, which descended with

its fringe of trees to the very edge of the water, and commanded the whole beautiful landscape, the expanse of the lake answering to every change of the sky, the homely towers of Hautecombe opposite, the mountains on either side, reflected in the profound blue mirror underneath. Within this enclosure no one could make a mysterious entry: no one at least clothed in ordinary flesh and blood. To his bewildered mind it was the most grateful relief to escape thus from the dilemma before him; and in any case he must gain time for examination and thought.

CHAPTER LI.

MRS. LENNOX was struck dumb with amazement when she heard what her brother's morning's occupation had been. 'Taken a house!' she cried, with a scream which summoned the whole party round her. But presently she consoled herself, and found it the best step which possibly could have been taken. It was a pretty place; and she could there complete her 'Koor' without let or hindrance. The other members of the party adapted themselves to it with the ease of youth: but there were many protests on the part of the people in the hotel; and to young Everard the news at first seemed fatal. He could not understand how it was that he met none of the party during the afternoon. In ordinary circumstances he crossed their path two or three times at least, and by a little strategy could make sure of being in Rosalind's company for a considerable part of every day, having indeed come to consider himself, and being generally considered, as one of Mrs. Lennox's habitual train. He thought at first that they had gone away altogether, and his despair was boundless. But very soon the shock was softened, and better things began to appear possible. Next day he met Mrs. Lennox going to her bath, and not only did she stop to explain everything to him, and tell him all about the new house, which was so much nicer than the hotel, but, led away by her own flood of utterance, and without thinking what John would say, she invited him at once to dinner.

'Dinner is rather a weak point,' she said, 'but there is something to eat always, if you don't mind taking your chance.'

'I would not mind, however little there might be,' he said beaming. 'I thought you had gone away, and I was in despair.'

'Oh no,' Mrs. Lennox said. But then she began to think what John would say.

John did not say very much when in the early dusk Everard, in all the glories of evening dress, made his appearance in the drawing-room at Bonport, which was furnished with very little except the view. But then the view was enough to cover many deficiencies. The room was rounded, almost the half of the wall being window, which was filled at all times, when there was light enough to see it, with one of those prospects of land and water which never lose their interest, and which take as many variations, as the sun rises and sets upon them, and the clouds and shadows flit over them, and the light pours out of the skies, as does an expressive human face. The formation of the room aided the effect by making this wonderful scene the necessary background of everything that occurred within: in that soft twilight the figures were as shadows against the brightness which still lingered upon the lake. John Trevanion stood against it, black in his height and massive outline, taking the privilege of his manhood and darkening for the others the remnant of daylight that remained. Mrs. Lennox's chair had been placed in a corner, as she liked it to be, out of what she called the draught, and all that appeared of her was one side of a soft heap, a small mountain, of drapery; while on the other hand, Rosalind, slim and straight, a soft whiteness, appeared against the trellis of the verandah. The picture was all in shadows, uncertain, visionary, save for the outline of John Trevanion, which was very solid and uncompromising, and produced a great effect amid the gentle vagueness of all around. The young man faltered on the threshold at sight of him, feeling none of the happy sympathetic security which he had felt in the company of the ladies and the children. Young Everard was in reality too ignorant of society and its ways to have thought of the inevitable interviews with guardians, and investigations into antecedents which would necessarily attend any possible engagement with a girl in Rosalind's position. But there came a cold shiver over him when he saw the man's figure opposite to him as he entered, and a prevision of an examination very different from anything he had calculated upon came into his mind. For a moment the impulse of flight seized him; but that was impossible, and however terrible the ordeal might be it was evident that he must face it. It was well for him, however, that it was so dark that the changes of his colour and hesitation of his manner were not so visible as they would otherwise have been. Mrs. Lennox was of opinion that he was shy—perhaps even more shy than usual from the fact that

John was not so friendly as, in view of what Mr. Everard had done for the children, he ought to have been. And she did her best accordingly to encourage the visitor. The little interval before dinner in the twilight, when they could not see each other, was naturally awkward, and except by herself little was said: but she had a generally well-justified faith in the effect of dinner as a softening and mollifying influence. When, however, the party were seated in the dining-room, round the shaded lamp, which threw a brilliant light on the table, and left the faces round it in a sort of pink shadow, matters were little better than before. The undesired guest, who had not self-confidence enough to appear at his ease, attempted after a while to entertain Mrs. Lennox with scraps of gossip from the hotel, though always in a deprecating tone and with an apologetic humility; but this conversation went on strangely in the midst of an atmosphere hushed by many agitations, where the others were kept silent by thoughts and anxieties too great for words. John Trevanion, who could scarcely contain himself or restrain his inclination to take this young intruder by the throat and compel him to explain who he was, and what he did here, and Rosalind, who had looked with incredulous apathy at the telegram her uncle had received from Mrs. Trevanion's lawyers, informing him that nothing had happened to her, so far as they were aware, sat mute, both of them, listening to the mild chatter without taking any part in it. Mrs. Lennox wagged, if not her beard at least the laces of her cap, as she discussed the company at the *table d'hôte*. 'And these people were Russians, after all?' she said. 'Why, I thought them English, and you remember Rosalind and you, Mr. Everard, declared they must be German—and all the time they were Russians. How very odd! And it was the little man who was the lady's husband! Well, I never should have guessed that. Yes, I knew our going away would make a great gap—so many of us you know. But we have got some friends coming. Do you mean to take rooms at the Venat for Mr. Rivers, John? And then there is Roland Hamerton——'

'Is Roland Hamerton coming here?'

'With Rex, I think. Oh yes, he is sure to come—he is great friends with Rex. I am so glad the boy should have such a steady, nice friend. But we cannot take him in at Bonport, and of course he never would expect such a thing. Perhaps you will mention at the bureau, Mr. Everard, that some friends of mine will be wanting rooms.'

'I had no idea,' said John, with a tone of annoyance, 'that so large a party was expected.'

'Rex?' said Mrs. Lennox, with simple audacity. 'Well, I hope you don't think I could refuse our own boy when he wanted to come.'

'He ought to have been at school,' the guardian grumbled under his breath.

'John! when you agreed yourself he was doing no good at school: and the masters said so, and everybody. And he is too young to go to Oxford; and whatever you may think, John, I am very glad to know that a nice, good, steady young man like Roland Hamerton has taken such a fancy to Rex. Oh yes, he has taken a great fancy to him—he is staying with him now. It shows that though the poor boy may be a little wilful, he is thoroughly nice in his heart. Though even without that,' said Mrs. Lennox, ready to weep, 'I should always be glad to see Roland Hamerton, shouldn't you, Rosalind? He is always good and kind, and we have known him, and Rosalind has known him, all his life.'

Rosalind made no reply to this appeal. She was in no mood to say anything, to take any part in common conversation. Her time of peace and repose was over. If there had been nothing else, the sudden information only now conveyed to her of the coming of Rivers and of Hamerton, with what motive she knew too well, would have been enough to stop her mouth. She heard this with a thrill of excitement, of exasperation, and at the same time of alarm, which is far from the state of mind supposed by the visionary philosopher to whom it seems meet that a good girl should have seven suitors. Above all, the name of Rivers filled her with alarm. He was a man who was a stranger, who would insist upon an answer, and probably think himself ill-used if that answer was not favourable. With so many subjects of thought already weighing upon her, to have this added made her brain swim. And when she looked up and caught, from the other side of the table, a wistful gaze from those eyes which had so long haunted her imagination, Rosalind's dismay was complete. She shrank into herself with a troubled consciousness that all the problems of life were crowding upon her, and at a moment when she had little heart to consider any personal question at all, much less such a one as this.

The party round the dinner table was thus a very agitated party, and by degrees less and less was said. The movements

of the servants—Mrs. Lennox's agile courier and John Trevanion's solemn English attendant, whose face was like wood—became very audible, the chief action of the scene. To Everard, the silence, broken only by these sounds and by Mrs. Lennox's voice coming in at intervals, was as the silence of fate. He made exertions which were really stupendous to find something to say, to seize the occasion and somehow divert the catastrophe which, though he did not know what it would be, he felt to be hanging over his head; but his throat was dry and his lips parched, notwithstanding the wine which he swallowed in his agitation, and not a word would come. When the ladies rose to leave the table, he felt that the catastrophe was very near. He was paralysed by their sudden movement, which he had not calculated upon, and had not even presence of mind to open the door for them as he ought to have done, but stood gazing with his mouth open and his napkin in his hand, to find himself alone and face to face with John Trevanion. He had not thought of this terrible ordeal. In the hotel life to which he had of late been accustomed, the awful interval after dinner is necessarily omitted, and Everard had not been brought up in a society which sits over its wine. When he saw John Trevanion bearing down upon him with his glass of wine in his hand, to take Mrs. Lennox's place, he felt that he did not know to what trial this might be preliminary, and turned towards his host with a sense of danger and terror which nothing in the circumstances seemed to justify, restraining with an effort the gasp in his throat. John began innocently enough by some remark about the wine. It was very tolerable wine, better than might have been expected in a country overrun by visitors. 'But I suppose the strangers will be going very soon, as I hear the season is nearly over. Have you been long here?'

'A month—six weeks I mean—since early in August.'

'And did you come for the "Cure"? You must have taken a double allowance.'

'It was not exactly for the cure; at least I have stayed on for—for other reasons.'

'Pardon me if I seem inquisitive,' said John Trevanion. 'It was you, was it not, whom I met in the village at Highcourt two years ago?'

'Yes, it was I.'

'That was a very unlikely place to meet—more unlikely than Aix. I must ask your pardon again, Mr. Everard: you will allow that when I find you here, almost a member of my sister's family,

I have a right to inquire. Do you know that there were very unpleasant visitors at Highcourt in search of you after you were gone ?'

The young man looked at him with eyes expanding and dilating—where had he seen such eyes?—a deep crimson flush, and a look of such terror and anguish that John Trevanion's good heart was touched. He had anticipated a possible bravado of denial, which would have given him no difficulty, but this was much less easy to deal with.

'Mr. Trevanion,' Everard said, with lips so parched that he had to moisten them before he could speak, 'that was a mistake, it was indeed! That was all arranged: you would not put me to shame for a thing so long past, and that was entirely a mistake! It was put right in every way, every farthing was paid. A great change happened to me at that time of my life. I had been kept out of what I had a right to, and badly treated. But after that a change occurred. I can assure you, and the people themselves would tell you. I can give you their address.'

'I should not have spoken to you on the subject if I had not been disposed to accept any explanation you could make,' said John Trevanion: which was but partially true so far as his intention went, although it was impossible to doubt an explanation which was so evidently sincere. After this there ensued a silence, during which Everard, the excitement in his mind growing higher and higher, turned over every subject on which he thought it possible that he could be questioned further. He thought, as he sat there drawn together on his defence, eagerly yet stealthily examining the countenance of this inquisitor, that he had thought of everything and could not be taken by surprise. Nevertheless his heart gave a great bound of astonishment when John Trevanion spoke again. The question he put was perhaps the only one for which the victim was unprepared. 'Would you mind telling me,' he said with great gravity and deliberation, 'what connection there was between you and my brother, the late Mr. Trevanion of Highcourt?'

CHAPTER LII.

THE moon was shining in full glory upon the lake, so brilliant and broad that the great glittering expanse of water retained something like a tinge of its natural blue in the wonderful splendour of the light. It was not a night on which to keep indoors. Mrs. Lennox

in the drawing-room, after she had left her *protégé* to the tender mercies of John, had been a little hysterical, or at least, as she allowed, very much 'upset.' 'I don't know what has come over John,' she said; 'I think his heart is turned to stone. Oh, Rosalind, how could you keep so still? You that have such a feeling for the children, and saw the way that poor young fellow was being bullied. It is a thing I will not put up with in my house—if it can be said that this is my house. Yes, bullied. John has never said a word to him! And I am sure he is going to make himself disagreeable now, and when there is nobody to protect him—and he is so good and quiet and takes it all so well,' said Mrs. Lennox, with a great confusion of persons, 'for our sakes.'

Rosalind did her best to soothe and calm her aunt's excitement, and at last succeeded in persuading her that she was very tired, and had much better go to bed. 'Oh, yes, I am very tired. What with my bath, and the trouble of removing down here, and having to think of the dinners, and all this trouble about Johnny and Amy, and your uncle that shows so little feeling—of course, I am very tired. Most people would have been in bed an hour ago. If you think you can remember my message to poor Mr. Everard; to tell him never to mind John; that it is just his way and nobody takes any notice of it;—and say good-night to him for me. But you know you have a very bad memory, Rosalind, and you will never tell him the half of that.'

'If I see him, Aunt Sophy; but he may not come in here at all,'

'Oh, you may trust him to come in,' Aunt Sophy said; and with a renewed charge not to forget, she finally rang for her maid, and went away, with all her little properties, to bed. Rosalind did not await the interview which Mrs. Lennox was so certain of. She stole out of the window, which stood wide open like a door, into the moonlight. Everything was so still that the movements of the leaves, as they rustled faintly, took importance in the great quiet; and the dip of an oar into the water, which took place at slow intervals, somewhere about the middle of the lake, where some romantic visitors were out in the moonlight, was almost a violent interruption. Rosalind stepped out into the soft night, with a sense of escape, not thinking much perhaps of the messages with which she had been charged. The air was full of that faint but all-pervading fragrance made up of odours, imperceptible in themselves, which belong to the night, and the moon made everything sacred, spreading a white beatitude even over the distant peaks of the hills. The girl, in her great trouble and anxiety, felt soothed

and stilled without any reason by those ineffable ministrations of nature which are above all rule. She avoided the gravel, which rang and jarred under her feet, and wandered across the dry grass, which was burned brown with the heat, not like the verdant English turf, towards the edge of the slope. She had enough to think of, but for the moment, in the hush of the night, did not think at all, but gave herself over to the tranquillising calm. Her cares went from her for the moment, the light and the night together went to her heart. Sometimes this quiet will come unsought to those who are deeply weighted with pain and anxiety; and Rosalind was very young: and when all nature says it so unanimously, how is a young creature to contradict, and say that all will not be well? Even the old and weary will be deceived, and take that on the word of the kind skies and hushed believing earth. She strayed about among the great laurels and daphnes, under the shadow of the trees, with her spirit calmed and relieved from the pressure of troublous events and thoughts. She had forgotten, in that momentary exaltation, that any interruption was possible, and stood, clearly visible in the moonlight, looking out upon the lake, when she heard the sound behind her of an uncertain step coming out upon the verandah, then, crossing the gravel path, coming towards her. She had not any thought of concealing herself, nor had she time to do so, when Everard came up to her, breathless with haste, and what seemed to be excitement. He said quickly. 'You were not in the drawing-room, and the window was open. I thought you would not mind if I came after you.' Rosalind looked up at him somewhat coldly, for she had forgotten he was there.

'I thought you had gone,' she said, turning half towards him, as if—which was true—she did not mean to be disturbed. His presence had a jarring effect, and broke the enchantment of the scene. He was always instantly sensitive to any rebuff.

'I thought,' he repeated apologetically, 'that you would not mind. You have always made me feel so much—so much at home.'

These ill-chosen words roused Rosalind's pride. 'My aunt,' she said, 'has always been very glad to see you, Mr. Everard, and grateful to you for what you have done for us.'

'Is that all?' he said hastily; 'am I always to have those children thrown in my teeth? I thought now, by this time, that you might have cared for me a little for myself; I thought we had taken to each other,' he added, with a mixture of irritation and pathos, with the straightforward sentiment of a child; 'for you

know very well,' he cried, after a pause, 'that it is not for nothing I am always coming; that it is not for the children, nor for your aunt, nor for anything but you. You know that I think of nothing but you.'

The young man's voice was hurried and tremulous with real feeling, and the scene was one, above all others, in harmony with a love tale; and Rosalind's heart had been touched by many a soft illusion in respect to the speaker, and had made him, before she knew him, the subject of many a dream; but at this supreme moment a strange effect took place in her. With a pang, acute as if it had been cut off by a blow, the mist of illusion was suddenly severed, and floated away from her, leaving her eyes cold and clear. A sensation of shame that she should ever have been deceived, that she could have deceived him, ran hot through all her being. 'I think,' she said quickly, 'Mr. Everard, that you are speaking very wildly. I know nothing at all of why you come, of what you are thinking.' Her tone was indignant, almost haughty, in spite of herself.

'Ah!' he cried, 'I know what you think; you think that I am not as good as you are, that I'm not a gentleman. Rosalind, if you knew who I was you would not think that. I could tell you about somebody that you are very, very fond of; ay! and make it easy for you to see her and be with her as much as ever you pleased, if you would listen to me. If you only knew, there are many, many things I could do for you. I could clear up a great deal if I chose. I could tell you much you want to know if I chose. I have been fighting off John Trevanion, but I would not fight off you. If you will only promise me a reward for it; if you will let your heart speak; if you will give me what I am longing for, Rosalind!'

He poured forth all this with such impassioned haste, stammering with excitement and eagerness, that she could but partially understand the sense, and not at all the extraordinary meaning and intention with which he spoke. She stood with her face turned to him, angry, bewildered, feeling that the attempt to catch the thread of something concealed and all-important in what he said, was more than her faculties were equal to; and on the surface of her mind was the indignation and almost shame, which such an appeal, unjustified by any act of hers, awakens in a sensitive girl. The sound of her own name from his lips seemed to strike her as if he had thrown a stone at her. 'Mr. Everard,' she cried, scarcely knowing what words she used, 'you have no right to call me Rosalind. What is it you mean?'

'Ah!' he cried with a laugh, 'you ask me that! you want to have what I can give, but give me nothing in return.'

'I think,' said Rosalind, quickly, 'that you forget yourself, Mr. Everard. A gentleman, if he has anything to tell, does not make bargains. What is it, about some one, whom you say I love——' She began to tremble very much, and put her hands together in an involuntary prayer! 'Oh, if it should be—Mr. Everard! I will thank you all my life, if you will tell me——'

'Promise me you will listen to me, Rosalind; promise me! I don't want your thanks; I want your—love. I have been after you for a long, long time; oh, before anything happened. Promise me——'

He put out his hands to clasp hers, but this was more than she could bear. She recoiled from him, with an unconscious revelation of her distaste, almost horror of these advances, which stung his self-esteem. 'You won't!' he cried hoarsely; 'I am to give everything and get nothing? Then I won't neither, and that is enough for to-night——'

He had got on the gravel again, in his sudden, angry step backwards, and turned on his heel, crushing the pebbles with a sound that seemed to jar through all the atmosphere. After he had gone a few steps he paused, as if expecting to be called back. But Rosalind's heart was all aflame. She said to herself, indignantly, that to believe such a man had anything to tell her was folly, was a shame to think of, was impossible. To chaffer and bargain with him, to promise him anything—her love, oh heaven! how dared he ask it?—was intolerable. She turned away with hot, feminine impulse, and a step in which there was no pause or wavering; increasing the distance between them at a very different rate from that achieved by his lingering steps. It seemed that he expected to be recalled after she had disappeared altogether and hidden herself panting among the shadows; for she could still hear his step pause with that jar and harsh noise upon the gravel, for what seemed to her, in her excitement, an hour of suspense. And Rosalind's heart jarred, as did all the echoes. Harsh vibrations of pain went through and through it. The rending away of her own self-illusion in respect to him, which was not unmingled with a sense of guilt—for that illusion had been half-voluntary, a fiction of her own creating, a refuge of the imagination from other thoughts—and at the same time a painful sense of his failure, and proof of the floating doubt and fear which had always been in her mind on his account—wounded

and hurt her, with almost a physical reality of pain. And what was this suggestion, cast into the midst of this whirlpool of agitated and troubled thought?—‘I could tell you; I could make it easy for you to see; I could clear up——’ What? oh what, in the name of heaven! could he mean?

She did not know how long she remained pondering these questions, making a circuitous round through the grounds, under the shadows, until she got back again, gliding noiseless to the verandah from which she could dart into the house at any return of her unwelcome suitor. But she still stood there after all had relapsed into the perfect silence of night in such a place. The tourists in the boat had rowed to the beach and disembarked, and disappeared on their way home. The evening breeze dropped altogether and ceased to move the trees, while she still stood against the trelliswork scarcely visible in the gloom, wondering, trying to think, trying to satisfy the questions that arose in her mind, with a vague sense that if she but knew what young Everard meant, there might be in it some guide, some clue to the mystery which weighed upon her soul. But this was not all that Rosalind was to encounter. While she stood thus gazing out from her with eyes that noted nothing, yet could not but see, she was startled by something, a little wandering shadow, not much more substantial than her dreams, which flitted across the scene before her. Her heart leaped up with a pang of terror. What was it? When the idea of the supernatural has once gained admission into the mind, the mental perceptions are often disabled in after emergencies. Her strength abandoned her. She covered her eyes with her hands, with a rush of the blood to her head, a failing of all her powers. Something white as the moonlight flitting across the moonlight, a movement, a break in the stillness of nature. When she looked up again there was nothing to be seen. Was there nothing to be seen? With a sick flutter of her heart, searching the shadows round with keen eyes, she had just made sure that there was nothing on the terrace, when a whiteness among the shrubs drew her eyes farther down. Her nerves, which had played her false for a moment, grew steady again, though her heart beat wildly. There came a faint sound like a footstep which reassured her a little. In such circumstances sound is salvation. She herself was a sight to have startled any beholder, as timidly, breathlessly, under the impulse of a visionary terror, she came out, herself all white, into the whiteness of the night. She called ‘Is there anyone there?’ in a very tremulous voice. No answer came to her

question; but she could now see clearly the other moving speck of whiteness, gliding on under the dark trees, emerging from the shadows, on to a little point of vision from which the foliage had been cleared a little farther down. It stood there for a moment, whiteness on whiteness, the very embodiment of a dream. A sudden idea flashed into Rosalind's mind, relieving her brain, and without pausing a moment she hurried down the path, relieved from one fear only to be seized by another. She reached the little ghost as it turned from that platform to continue the descent. The whiteness of the light had stolen the colour out of the child's hair. She was like a little statue in alabaster, her bare feet, her long half-curved locks, the folds of her nightdress all softened and rounded in the light. 'Amy!' cried Rosalind—but Amy did not notice her sister. Her face had the solemn look of sleep, but her eyes were open. She went on unconscious, going forward to some visionary end of her own from which no outward influence could divert her. Rosalind's terror was scarcely less great than when she thought it an apparition. She followed, with her heart and her head both throbbing, the unconscious little wanderer. Amy went down through the trees and shrubs to the very edge of the lake, so close that Rosalind behind hovered over her, ready at the next step to seize upon her, her senses coming back, but her mind still confused, in her perplexity not knowing what to do. Then there was for a moment a breathless pause. Amy turned her head from side to side, as if looking for some one, Rosalind seated herself on a stone to wait what should ensue. It was a wonderful scene. The dark trees waved overhead, but the moon, coming down in a flood of silver, lit up all the beach below. It might have been an allegory of a mortal astray, with a guardian angel standing close, watching, yet with no power to save. The water moving softly with its ceaseless ripple, the soft yet chill air of night rustling in the leaves, were the only things that broke the stillness. The two human figures in the midst seemed almost without breath.

Rosalind did not know what to do. In the calm of peaceful life such incidents are rare. She did not know whether she might not injure the child by awaking her. But while she waited, anxious and trembling, Nature solved the question for her. The little wavelets lapping the stones came up with a little rush and sparkle in the light an inch or two farther than before, and bathed Amy's bare feet. The cold touch broke the spell in a moment. The child started and sprang up with a sudden cry. What might have happened to her had she woken to find herself

alone on the beach in the moonlight, Rosalind trembled to think. Her cry rang along all the silent shore, a cry of distracted and bewildering terror: 'Oh, mamma! mamma! where are you?' then Amy, turning suddenly round, flew, wild with fear, fortunately into her sister's arms.

'Rosalind! is it Rosalind? And where is mamma? oh, take me to mamma. She said she would be here.' It was all Rosalind could do to subdue and control the child, who nearly suffocated her, clinging to her throat, urging her on: 'I want mamma—take me to mamma!' she cried, resisting her sister's attempts to lead her up the slope towards the house. Rosalind's strength was not equal to the struggle. After a while her own longing burst forth. 'Oh, if I knew where I could find her!' she said, clasping the struggling child in her arms. Amy was subdued by Rosalind's tears. The little passion wore itself out. She looked round her, shuddering in the whiteness of the moonlight. 'Rosalind! are we all dead, like mamma?' Amy said.

The penetrating sound of the child's cry reached the house and far beyond it, disturbing uneasy sleepers all along the edge of the lake. It reached John Trevanion, who was seated by himself chewing the cud of fancy, bitter rather than sweet, and believing himself the only person astir in the house. There is something in a child's cry which touches the hardest heart: and his heart was not hard. It did not occur to him that it could proceed from any of the children of the house, but it was too full of misery and pain to be neglected. He went out, hastily opening the great window, and was in his terror almost paralysed by the sight of the two white figures among the trees, one leaning upon the other. It was only after a momentary hesitation that he hurried towards them, arriving just in time, when Rosalind's strength was about giving way, and carried Amy into the house. The entire household, disturbed, came from all corners with lights and outcries. But Amy, when she had been warmed and comforted, and laid in Rosalind's bed, and recovered of her sobbing, had no explanations to give. She had dreamed she was going to mamma, that mamma was waiting for her down on the side of the lake. 'Oh, I want mamma, I want mamma!' the child cried, and would not be comforted.

CHAPTER LIII.

ARTHUR RIVERS had come home on the top of the wave of prosperity; his little war was over, and if it was not he who had

gained the day, he yet had a large share of its honours. It was he who had made it known to all the eager critics in England, and given them the opportunity to let loose their opinion. He had kept the supply of news piping hot, one supply ready to be served as soon as the other was despatched, to the great satisfaction of the public and of his 'proprietors.' His well-known energy, daring, and alertness, the qualities for which he had been sent out, had never been so largely manifested before. He had thrown himself into the brief but hot campaign with the ardour of a soldier. But there was more in it than this. It was with the ardour of a lover that he had laboured—a lover with a great deal to make up to bring him to the level of her he loved. And his zeal had been rewarded. He was coming home, to an important post, with an established place and position in the world, leaving his life of adventure and wandering behind him. They had their charms, and in their time he had enjoyed them; but what he wanted now was something that it would be possible to ask Rosalind to share. Had he been the commander, as he had only been the historian of the expedition; had he brought back a baronetcy and a name famous in the annals of the time, his task would have been easier. As it was, his reputation—though to its owner very agreeable—was of a kind which many persons scoff at. The soldiers, for whom he had done more than anybody else could do, recommending them to their country as even their blood and wounds would never have recommended them without his help, did not make any return for his good offices, and held him cheap; but, on the other hand, it had procured him his appointment, and made it possible for him to put his question to Rosalind into a practical shape and repeat it to her uncle. He came home with his mind full of this and of excitement and eagerness. He had no time to lose. He was too old for Rosalind as well as not good enough for her, not rich enough, not great enough. Sir Arthur Rivers, K.C.B., the conquering hero—that would have been the right thing. But since he was not that, the only thing he could do was to make the most of what he was. He could give her a pretty house in London, where she would see the best of company, not the gentle dulness of the country, but all the wits, all that was brilliant in society, and have the cream of those amusements and diversions which make life worth living in town. That is always something to offer, if you have neither palaces nor castles, nor a great name nor a big fortune. Some women would think it better than all these; and

he knew that it would be full of pleasures and pleasantness, not dull—a life of variety and brightness and ease. Was it not very possible that these things would tempt her, as they have tempted women more lofty in position than Rosalind? And he did not think her relations would oppose it if she so chose. His family was very obscure; but that has ceased to be of the importance it once was. He did not believe that John Trevanion would hesitate on account of his family. If only Rosalind should be pleased! It was, perhaps, because he was no longer quite young that he thought of what he had to offer; going over it a thousand times, and wondering if this and that might not have a charm to her as good, perhaps better, than the different things that other people had to offer. He was a man who was supposed to know human nature and to have studied it much, and had he been writing a book he would no doubt have scoffed at the idea of a young girl considering the attractions of different ways of living and comparing what he had to give with what other people possessed. But there was a certain humility in the way in which his mind approached the subject in his own case, not thinking of his own personal merits. He could give her a bright and full and entertaining life. She would never be dull with him. That was better even than rank, he said to himself.

Rivers arrived a few days after the Trevanion party had gone to Bonport. He was profoundly pleased and gratified to find John Trevanion waiting at the station, and to receive his cordial greeting. 'My sister will expect to see you very soon,' he said. 'They think it is you who are the hero of the war; and, indeed, so you have been, almost as much as Sir Ruby, and with fewer jealousies; and the new post, I hear, is a capital one. I should say you were a lucky fellow, if you had not worked so well for it all.'

'Yes, I hear it is a pleasant post; and to be able to stay at home, and not be sent off to the end of the earth at a moment's notice—'

'How will you bear it? that is the question,' said John Trevanion. 'I should not wonder if in a year you were bored to death.'

Rivers shook his head, with a laugh. 'And I hope all are well,' he said; 'Mrs. Lennox and Miss Trevanion.'

He did not venture as yet to put the question more plainly.

'We are all well enough,' said John, 'though there are always vexations. Oh! nothing of importance, I hope; only some bother about the children and Rosalind. That's why I removed

them; but Rex is coming, and another young fellow, Hamerton—perhaps you recollect him at Clifton. I hope they will cheer us up a little. There is their train coming in. Let us see you soon. Good-night!’

Another young fellow, Hamerton! Then it was not to meet him, Rivers, that Trevanion was waiting. There was no special expectation of him. It was Rex, the schoolboy, and young Hamerton who was to cheer them up—Rex a sulky, young cub, and Hamerton, a thick-headed rustic. John went off quite unconscious of the arrow he had planted in his friend’s heart, and Rivers turned away, with a blank countenance, to his hotel, feeling that he had fallen down—down from the skies into a bottomless abyss. All this while, during so many days of travel, he had been coming towards her; now he seemed to be thrown back from her—back into uncertainty and the unknown. He lingered a little as the train from Paris came in, and heard John Trevanion’s cheerful ‘Oh, here you are!’ and the sound of the other voices. It made his heart burn to think of young Hamerton—the young clodhopper!—going to her presence, while he went gloomily to the hotel. His appearance late for dinner presented a new and welcome enigma to the company who dined at the *table d’hôte*. Who was he? Some one fresh from India, no doubt, with that bronzed countenance and hair which had no right to be grey. There was something distinguished about his appearance which everybody remarked, and a little flutter of curiosity to know who he was awoke especially among the English people, who, but that he seemed so entirely alone, would have taken him for Sir Ruby himself. Rivers took a little comfort from the sense of his own importance and of the sensation made by his appearance. But to arrive here with his mind full of Rosalind, and to find himself sitting alone at a foreign *table d’hôte*, with half the places empty and not a creature he knew, chilled him ridiculously—he who met people he knew in every out-of-the-way corner in the earth. And all the time Hamerton at her side—Hamerton, a young nobody! There was no doubt that it was very hard to bear. As soon as dinner was over he went out to smoke his cigar and go over again, more ruefully than ever, his prospects of success. It was a brilliant moonlight night, the trees in the hotel garden standing, with their shadows at their feet, in a blackness as of midnight, while between every vacant space was full of the intense white radiance. He wandered out and in among them, gloomily thinking how different the

night would have been had he been looking down upon the silver lake by the side of Rosalind. No doubt that was what she was doing. Would there be any recollection of him among her thoughts, or of the question he had asked her in the conservatory at the Elms? Would she think he was coming for his answer, and what in all this long interval had she been making up her mind to reply?

He was so absorbed in these thoughts that he took no note of the few people about. These were very few, for though the night was as warm as it was bright, it was yet late in the season, and the rheumatic people thought there was a chill in the air. By degrees even the few figures that had been visible at first dwindled away, and Rivers at last awoke to the consciousness that there was but one left, a lady in black, very slight, very light of foot, for whose coming he was scarcely ever prepared when she appeared, and who shrank into the shadow as he came up, as if to avoid his eye. Something attracted him in this mysterious figure, he could not tell what, a subtle sense of some link of connection between her and himself; some internal and unspoken suggestion which quickened his eyes and interest, but which was too indefinite to be put into words. Who could she be? Where had he seen her? he asked, catching a very brief momentary glimpse of her face; but he was a man who knew everybody, and it was little wonder if the names of some of his acquaintances should slip out of his recollection. It afforded him a sort of occupation to watch for her, to calculate when in the round of the garden which she seemed to be making she would come to that bare bit of road, disclosed by the opening in the trees, where the moonlight revealed in a white blaze everything that passed. He was for the moment absorbed in this pursuit—for it was in reality a pursuit, a sort of hunt through his own mind for some thread of association connected with a wandering figure like this—when some one else, a new-comer, came hastily into the garden, and established himself at a table close by. There was no mistaking this stranger—a robust young Englishman still in his travelling dress, whom Rivers recognised with mingled satisfaction and hostility. He was not then spending the evening with Rosalind, this young fellow who was not worthy to be admitted to her presence. That was a satisfaction in its way. He had been received to dinner because he came with the boy, but that was all. Young Hamerton sat down in the full moonlight where no one could make any mistake about him. He recognised Rivers with a stiff little bow.

They said to each other, 'It is a beautiful night,' and then relapsed respectively into silence. But in the heat of personal feeling thus suddenly evoked, Rivers forgot the mysterious lady for a moment, and saw her no more. After some time the new-comer said to him, with a sort of reluctant abruptness, 'They are rather in trouble over there,' making a gesture with his hand to indicate some locality on the other side of the darkly-waving trees.

'In trouble——'

'Oh, not of much importance, perhaps. The children—have all been—upset: I don't understand it quite. There was something that disturbed them—in the hotel here. Perhaps you know——'

'I only arrived this evening,' Rivers said.

The other drew a long breath. Was it of relief? Perhaps he had spoken only to discover whether his rival had been long enough in the neighbourhood to have secured any advantage. 'We brought over the old nurse with us—the woman, you know, who—— Oh, I forgot, you don't know,' Hamerton added, hastily. This was said innocently enough, but it offended the elder suitor, jealous and angry after the unreasonable manner of a lover, that any one, much less this young fellow, whose pretensions were so ridiculous, should have known her and her circumstances before and better than himself.

'I prefer not to know anything that the Trevanions do not wish to be known,' he said sharply. It was not true, for his whole being quivered with eagerness to know everything about them, all that could be told; but at the same time there was in his harsh tones a certain justness of reproach that brought the colour to young Hamerton's face.

'You are quite right,' he said; 'it is not my business to say a word.'

And then there was silence again. It was growing late. The verandahs of the great hotel, a little while ago full of chattering groups, were all vacant; the lights had flitted upstairs; a few weary waiters lounged about the doors, anxiously waiting till the two Englishmen—so culpably incautious about the night air and the draughts, so brutally indifferent to the fact that Jules and Adolphe and the rest had to get up very early in the morning and longed to be in bed—should come in, and all things be shut up; but neither Hamerton nor Rivers thought of Adolphe and Jules.

Finally, after a long silence, the younger man spoke again. His mind was full of one subject, and he wanted some one to speak to, were it only his rival. 'This cannot be a healthy place,'

he said ; ' they are not looking well—they are all—upset. I suppose it is bad for—the nerves——'

' Perhaps there may be other reasons,' said Rivers. His heart stirred within him at the thought that agitation, perhaps of a nature kindred to his own, might be affecting the one person who was uppermost in the thoughts of both—for he did not doubt that Hamerton, who had said *them*, meant Rosalind. That she might be pale with anticipation, nervous and tremulous in this last moment of suspense! the idea brought a rush of blood to his face, and a warm flood of tender thoughts and delight to his heart.

' I don't know what other reasons,' said Hamerton. ' She thinks—I mean there is nothing thought of but those children. Something has happened to them. The old nurse, the woman—I told you—came over with us to take them in hand. Poor little things! it is not much to be wondered at——' he said, and then stopped short, with the air of a man who might have a great deal to say.

A slight rustling in the branches behind caught Rivers' attention. All his senses were very keen, and he had the power, of great advantage in his profession, of seeing and hearing without appearing to do so. He turned his eyes but not his head in the direction of that faint sound, and saw with great wonder the lady whom he had been watching, an almost imperceptible figure against the opaque background of the high shrubs, standing behind Hamerton. Her head was a little thrust forward in the attitude of listening, and the moon just caught her face. He was too well disciplined to suffer the cry of recognition which came to his lips to escape from them, but in spite of himself expressed his excitement in a slight movement—a start which made the rustic chair on which he was seated quiver, and displaced the gravel under his feet. Hamerton did not so much as notice that he had moved at all, but the lady's head was drawn back, and the thick foliage behind once more moved as by a breath, and all was still. Rivers was very much absorbed in one pursuit and one idea, which made him selfish: but yet his heart was kind. He conquered his antipathy to the young fellow who was his rival, whom (on that ground) he despised, yet feared, and forced himself to ask a question, to draw him on. ' What has happened to the children,' he said ; ' are they ill ? ' There was a faint breeze in the tree-tops, but none down here in the solid foliage of the great bushes ; yet there was a stir in the laurel as of a bird in its nest.

' They are not ill, but yet something has happened. I believe

the little things have been seeing ghosts. They sent for this woman, Russell, you know—confound her——’

‘Why confound her?’

‘Oh, it’s a long story—confound her all the same! There are some women that it is very hard for a man not to wish to knock down. But I suppose they think she’s good for the children. That is all they think of, it appears to me,’ Roland said, dejectedly. ‘The children—always the children—one cannot get in a word. And as for anything else—anything that is natural——’

This moved Rivers on his own account. Sweet hope was high in his heart. It might very well be that this young fellow could not get in a word. Who could tell that the excuse of the children might not be made use of to silence an undesired suitor, to leave the way free for—— His soul melted with a delicious softness and sense of secret exultation. ‘Let us hope their anxiety may not last,’ he said, restraining himself, keeping as well as he could the triumph out of his voice. Hamerton looked at him quickly, keenly; he felt that there was exultation—something exasperating—a tone of triumph in it.

‘I don’t see why it shouldn’t last,’ he said. ‘Little Amy is like a little ghost herself; but how can it be otherwise in such an unnatural state of affairs—the mother gone, and all the responsibility put upon one—upon one who—— For what is Mrs. Lennox?’ he cried, half-angrily; ‘oh yes, a good kind soul—but she has to be taken care of too—and all upon one—upon one who——’

‘You mean Miss Trevanion?’

‘I don’t mean—to bring in any names. Look here,’ cried the young man, ‘you and I, Rivers—we are not worthy to name her name.’

His voice was a little husky; his heart was in his mouth. He felt a sort of brotherly feeling even for this rival who might perhaps, being clever (he thought), be more successful than he, but who, in the meantime, had more in common with him than any other man, because he too loved Rosalind. Rivers did not make any response. Perhaps he was not young enough to have this feeling for any woman. A man may be very much in love—may be ready even to make any exertion, almost any sacrifice, to win the woman he loves, and yet be unable to echo such a sentiment. He could not allow that he was unworthy to name her name. Hamerton scarcely noticed his silence, and yet was a little relieved not to have any response.

‘I am a little upset myself,’ he said, ‘because you know I’ve

been mixed up with it all from the beginning, which makes one feel very differently from those that don't know the story. I couldn't help just letting out a little. I beg your pardon for taking up your time with what perhaps doesn't interest you.'

This stung the other man to the quick. 'It interests me more, perhaps, than you could understand,' he cried. 'But,' he added, after a pause, 'it remains to be seen whether the family wish me to know—not certainly at second-hand.'

Hamerton sprang to his feet in hot revulsion of feeling. 'If you mean me by the second-hand,' he said: then paused, ashamed both of the good impulse and the less good which had made him thus betray himself. 'I beg your pardon,' he added; 'I've been travelling all day, and I suppose I'm tired and apt to talk nonsense. Good-night.'

Jules and Adolphe were glad. They showed the young Englishman to his room with joy, making no doubt that the other would follow. But the other did not follow. He sat for a time silently with his head on his hand. Then he rose, and walking to the other side of the great bouquet of laurels, paused in the profound shadow, where there stood, as he divined rather than saw, a human creature in mysterious anguish, anxiety, and pain. He made out with difficulty a tall shadow against the gloomy background of the close branches. 'I do not know who you are,' he said; 'I do not ask to know; but you are deeply interested in what that—that young fellow was saying?'

The voice that replied to him was very low. 'Oh, more than interested: it is like life and death to me. For God's sake, tell me if you know anything more.'

'I know nothing to-night—but to-morrow—You are the lady whom I met in Spain two years ago, whose portrait stands on Rosalind Trevanion's writing-table.'

There was a low cry: 'Oh! God bless you for telling me. God bless you for telling me,' and the sound of a suppressed sob.

'I shall see her to-morrow,' he said. 'I have come thousands of miles to see her. It is possible that I might be of use to you. May I tell her that you are here?'

The stir among the branches seemed to take a different character as he spoke, and the lady came out towards the partial light. She said firmly, 'No; I thank you for your kind intentions;' then paused. 'You will think it strange that I came behind you and listened. You will think it was not honourable. But I heard their name, and Roland Hamerton knows me. When

a woman is in great trouble she is driven to strange expedients. Sir,' she cried, after another agitated pause, 'I neither know your name nor who you are, but if you will bring me news to-morrow after you have seen them—if you will tell me—it will be a good deed—it will be a Christian deed.'

'Say something more to me than that,' he cried, with a passion that surprised himself; 'say that you will wish me well.'

She moved along softly, noiselessly, with her head turned to him, moving towards the moonlight, which was like the blaze of day, within a few steps from where they had been standing. The impression which had been upon his mind of a fugitive—a woman abandoned and forlorn—died out so completely, that he felt ashamed ever to have ventured upon such a thought. And he felt with a sudden sense of imperfection, quite unfamiliar to him, that he was being examined and judged. He felt, too, with an acute self-consciousness, that the silver in his hair shone in the white light, and that the counterbalancing qualities of fine outline and manly colour must be wanting in that wan and colourless illumination. He could not see her face, except as an abstract paleness, turned towards him, overshadowed by the veil which she had put back, but which still threw a deep shade; but she gazed into his, which he could not but turn towards her in the full light of the moon. The end of the examination was not very consolatory to his pride. She sighed and turned away. 'The man whom she chooses will want no other blessing,' she said.

A few minutes after Jules and Adolphe were happy shutting up the doors, putting out the lights, betaking themselves to the holes and corners under the stairs, under the roofs, in which these sufferers for the good of humanity slept.

(To be continued.)

'The Donna.'

THE EDITOR begs to acknowledge 10s. from C. C. C., and 5s. from S. de J., Liverpool.

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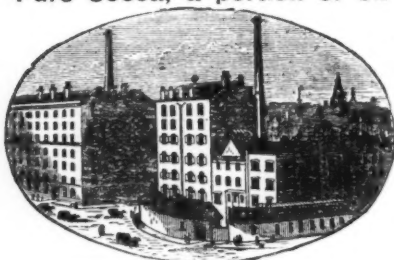
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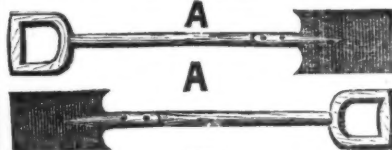
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